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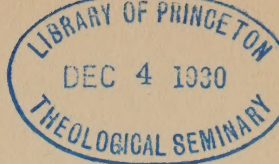
CHINA:
THE COLLAPSE OF A CIVILIZATION

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By
NATHANIEL PEFFER

NEW YORK
THE JOHN DAY COMPANY
1930



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PRINTED IN THE U. S. A.
FOR THE JOHN DAY COMPANY, INC.
BY THE QUINN & BODEN COMPANY, INC., RAHWAY, N. J.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

NATHANIEL PEFFER was born in New York City in 1890 and taken to Colorado by his family as a child. In 1911 he was graduated from the University of Chicago, where he had begun his journalistic career as editor of the college daily.

After three years of newspaper work in Chicago, he went to Honolulu, joining the staff of a newspaper there. After a few months he went on to China, where he remained most of the next six years, at first in Shanghai as assistant editor and acting editor of *The China Press* and later in Peking as correspondent of *The New York Tribune* and contributor to a number of American magazines.

Mr. Pfeffer returned to the United States for the Washington Conference in 1921. The following year he was commissioned by a group of magazines to go to Turkey and Eastern Europe. On his return to the United States in 1924 he resumed his writing for the magazines, including *Century*, *Asia*, *The New Republic*, *The Nation* and *The Forum* and later undertook a piece of research under the auspices of the Carnegie Corporation of New York. In 1926-27 he gave a course at the New School for Social Research on imperialism and in 1927 published a book, *The White Man's Dilemma; Climax of the Age of Imperialism*.

Late in 1927 Mr. Pfeffer went to China again on a research fellowship granted by the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation. He returned to the United States at the end of 1929 after remaining for a time in Europe. He is now giving a course on the Far East in Columbia University and has recently been contributing to *Harper's Magazine* and *The New Republic*.

FOREWORD

THIS book is based on a study made in pursuance of a fellowship granted by the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation. It follows on a visit to China in 1928 and 1929 and several years' residence there before then. It is neither a history of China, nor a description, nor an exposition of current events. It is not concerned with Chinese politics as such, the diplomatic controversies between China and the Powers, or the civil wars that figure in newspaper headlines. The central theme is the effect of a conflict of civilizations. An attempt is made to analyze what happens when one civilization is struck by another of greater force and vitality, as China has been struck by the impact of the West, the impact of Western military power, economic invasion, industrialism and ideas. It is sought to show that there is a logic of events in the apparent confusion now reigning in China and that this logic derives from the main fact in the history of the nineteenth century—the intrusion of the West into the East; the one young, vigorous, dynamic, suddenly given wide play by the conquest of distance and equipped with weapons forged in the armory of applied science; the other passive, weary, resigned, motionlessly poised in the simplicities and fixities of a non-mechanized civilization. It is sought to show that while isolated occurrences or developments in China may be inscrutable, the whole

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course of events is understandable, even inevitable, foredoomed by the sequence of cause and effect. There is no thesis; there is only analysis of China's recent history taken as a unity, and history not as event but as effect.

N. P.

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CHAPTER I

WHAT IS THE PROBLEM OF CHINA?

THE first and fundamental fact concerning China is that it contains nearly a quarter of the human race; in population it is the largest race in the world. The second conditioning fact is that it has the oldest continuous civilization still surviving, the oldest and the most deeply rooted. The third is that under the pressure of the times and the direct compulsion of the Occident China must now alter the form and spirit of this civilization and rebuild the society which rests upon it. From these three facts China derives its world importance and not from its status as an international "problem" and what experts in foreign affairs call a situation. If China is a problem and the problem periodically takes acute phases that arrest the attention of the governments, diplomats and press of the world, it is because of the consequences that flow from these basic facts. They underlie the history of China for the last hundred years, have given rise to the crises of recent years and will determine the form and direction of China's development in the future. Only in the light of them can China be understood, and any work on China must proceed from them as fixed points.

There is very little of the adventitious in the tumultuous and confused and perplexing history of China in recent times—in the wars, the succession of revolutions, the

meek submissiveness to the great Powers followed by sudden intransigence, and the social ferment which is working explosively through the whole body of age-old traditions, folkways and beliefs. Nor is there much more that can be attributed to personalities. Had some one event not occurred or had some other occurred in its stead, the course of history would have been deflected a little and for a time; there might have been a slight difference in the subsequent order of events. Had certain men not lived and exerted their influence as they did or had others lived and exerted other influences, the course of history would have been deflected a little further. More particularly has this been true in recent years, when much can be explained by the personal traits of certain leaders. But seen in perspective, individual men and individual acts have had only a very slight effect. The forces which have made China's recent history have been essentially unchanged by them. Taken singly, events in China have appeared sometimes irrational and often causeless. Viewed as a succession and in their whole course, they have been governed by a logic and characterized by a consistency which the omission or commission of a single act or the lack or possession of the quality of an individual prophet, statesman or warrior could never have changed. Their complexion might have been given another color; their essence would have remained the same.

This logic derives ultimately from what I have called the three basic facts in China, but that which has combined them so as to form a logical sequence is the coming of the West and the impact of its physical might and its

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civilization. The European guns that razed the forts of Canton and later cleared the way to Peking did more than shatter the barrier of China's isolation. They undermined its civilization. They also blew China out of its orbit and into a new and perilous position in the world and made what is now the world problem. China has the largest population in the world and it is self-evident that the destiny of one-fourth of the human race must affect the whole. But the effect would have been remote, indirect and intangible if China's size and riches had not tempted the powerful Western states as a prize and made of the country a counter in an international game of power politics. China's civilization was rigidly fixed in form, deeply implanted in the past and perhaps also sterile, from which certain consequences would have followed in any event. But being indigenous to China, they would have remained domestic in effect if it had not been for the slow erosion of Western ideas and the active, importunate aggressions of Western military and economic power.

If only Western ideas had entered by natural penetration in normal world inter-communication, a slow evolutionary adjustment might have been possible and China might have found a new equilibrium with a world which had gone forward with magical strides in material advancement. But European ambitions for domination and exploitation, supported on Europe's superior physical equipment, essentially superior military might, made orderly evolution impossible. It deprived the Chinese of initiative or choice. Their civilization was being spaded up,

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their social system thrown out of joint. They may have chosen to renounce their ancestral forms in any case. Most likely they would have, for the spirit of the times was imperative. But the attempt to change would not have had to be made as an indispensable means of self-preservation and carried out under fire. What China has had to attempt, what it is attempting now, is to change the structure of its society at the foundations without shaking the pillars. In that it is failing, of course, as all the physical laws of politics foredoom, and the resultant disturbances are felt not only in China but everywhere else in the world. Hence world problem, hence "situation." And there is the crux of China today and China tomorrow—in the China of yesterday. That which is now is the effect of the cause set in operation before—the disruption produced by the shock of the alien and tremendous force of the Occident.

One social system has lost its sanctions. No other has replaced it having sanctions equally binding. The result is confusion—political, economic, social and moral confusion. This is the real chaos in China. That which is commonly called chaos in the professional jargon of editorial writers, irate foreign traders and those who compose government notes is merely symptomatic. The political intrigues, military coups, dissensions, civil wars, misrule, disintegrations of government and official exploitation of the population are but outward manifestations of inner organic disorders. The day-to-day surface events which are set down as the contemporary history of China may be serious to those who are caught in them, tragically so to

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millions of the Chinese masses, but otherwise they lack significance. They are only incidents in a broader movement; or, rather, minor corollaries of a broader principle. That is, they are inevitable; they follow as an automatic sequence. Given the underlying situation, it could not be otherwise in China today. It will not be otherwise until the underlying situation has changed, until the present flux has settled and a new social order begins to function, with a new set of values, a new body of traditions and sanctions which are as binding as the old.

This may be platitudinous. Like many other platitudes it is forgotten in the concrete instance. We recognize causes until they have effects. Then we forget the causes and gird at the effects. The individual symptoms of the real chaos in China which are meant when the word is conventionally used are taken as independent phenomena and as unrelated to the background from which they spring or to any background at all. They are regarded as evidence of ill-will or of incapacity or as a fall from grace. By way of remedy we adjure China to restore peace, stabilize, institute a régime of law and order, establish an honest and efficient government, set its house in order as we usually put it, and woo progress generally, as if each of these were a single and separate deed requiring for its accomplishment only volition, energy, the necessary talents and right-mindedness, whereas they are all inter-related and dependent parts of a whole. To this fallacy can be attributed much of the misunderstanding which has given the world so false a picture of China, its affairs and its relation to other nations, and still more, has

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brought the Powers and China to the verge of at least one war in the last few years. When China is able to set its house in order, the advice will no longer be necessary. What we call order shall have arrived as a natural condition.

In the meantime, and just now in particular, to write about China is an ungrateful enterprise. There is no China. The China that was has passed or is passing. For all the vestiges that may still be found not far from the centers where dissolution and destruction have been most active, the old China is no more. The China that will be is not yet. Dim foreshadowings of what it may be flicker here and there and now and then, too blurred to form even an outline. Prospectuses abound in every newspaper, in every official pronouncement, in the words of all the articulate, the sometimes too articulate, members of the intelligentsia. But words are uttered and heard, or written and read, and before they can be taken in by the mind they are belied by what occurs. What is today in the eighteen provinces that constitute a continent rather than a country and among the four hundred million who constitute a race rather than a nation—that the mind cannot comprehend, because the eye cannot see clearly enough. The picture shifts too rapidly for focus. Perception is not sure enough; no concept can be fixed. No matter how long one has known China, how intently observed its progress or how intensively analyzed its affairs, one cannot grasp it. To attempt to do so is as one catching the surf. One clutches repeatedly, clutches feverishly, closes the hand on something—and the hand is empty. The figure is not unfitting.

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China seethes and heaves, rushes forward turbulently, and recedes. The old contours are being cut away and new ones filled in. In time, in a long time, there will be a new configuration. What it will be, none can guess; whether fairer and more fertile, none dares say. But this is certain: it will present a new landscape, a landscape the literati, poets and mandarins of only a hundred years ago would not recognize and still less love—and one that may well be more rugged and forbidding than the soft China that yielded so easily to the vigorous and aggressive intruder in times past.

What China can and will make of itself presents nevertheless one of the intellectually exciting problems of our time and in the making will be recorded one of the dramatic chapters in modern history. Can a race have a rebirth? Can it have two lives? Can a people—any people—be torn up by the roots, roots gnarled deep in the soil for more than three thousand years, and then throw out new roots, flourish and bear fruit again? Can the Chinese? In the T'ang dynasty, more than a thousand years ago, they were already old and tired and disillusioned, weary with the weariness of those who have experienced all, mellowed with the sadness of those who know the vanity of all things earthly, those for whom all questions have been answered, who have found their state of poise in the scheme of things and know there can be no other, who still have longings but no aspirations. Through nearly all the poetry and much of the art and philosophy of the time of the T'angs and the Sungs, a few centuries later, runs a distinct note of futilitarianism. There may be de-

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tected what can be diagnosed as symptoms of decadence; not a decadence of cyclic fashion, a swinging of the pendulum in one direction before a compensating swing in the other, but a real staleness of spirit and depletion of vitality. One may read Chinese history and find in it evidence that the nation was in the full brilliance of its glory in the T'ang dynasty and that all that has followed has been only a twilight afterglow which now at last is dying out. On the other hand, the movement of Chinese history has been in cycles, with a decline into catastrophe and a rise into magnificence following each other in fairly regular succession. It is possible, then, to construe the present as merely the under-curve of the cycle or to interpret China's easy conquest by foreign Powers in the last hundred years, its disintegration in the present and its failure to produce anything new or enduring in art, science, philosophy, political organization or material development in many generations, as evidence that racial vitality is irrecoverably spent.

For China all this is not a matter of abstract intellectual speculation. It is putting these questions to the test. It has now definitely entered on a new phase. The bonds of the past have been loosening for some years. They are now irreparably broken. It remains only to ask what will succeed. Will China be another Arabia, surviving biologically as so many individuals of Chinese physical characteristics but dead in spirit and a prey to conquest? Or will it lose its historic identity entirely and become an industrialized, Occidentalized country, a copy of that of which twentieth century America is the prototype, distinguishable only by

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the yellow skin and slant eyes of its inhabitants? If so, will it be Western in all except the dynamic vigor of the West; that is, Western in exterior and inwardly sterile because its distinctive and creative force, expended in making a culture which has been one of man's highest expressions, is forever exhausted? Or will the rugged energy of the race, its unique capacity for survival, its adaptability and sheer race intelligence manifest themselves still, even under new and untried conditions?

The Chinese have before and more than once surmounted difficulties to which a people less favorably endowed and of less tough fiber would have succumbed. The mere fact of their succeeding in carrying on life in a normal course through the appalling trials of the last twenty years is evidence that the race is not yet enervated. It at least has reserves of stamina and endurance not likely to be found in decayed or unsound stock. The ability of millions of their people to emigrate to all parts of the world, in every extreme of climate from Arctic Alaska to equatorial Malaysia, in every kind of physical environment from Siberian steppes to South Sea islands and every variety of social setting from primitive jungle communities to complex San Francisco, and to establish themselves securely, prosper and in some places dominate, and everywhere to adjust themselves to the environment in customs, habits and ways of living while always remaining Chinese—this hardly indicates that there is *a priori* an insuperable obstacle to their being able also to adjust themselves to the demands of a mechanized society. There are few places in the planet where there are not some Chi-

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nese, fewer still where they do not do well, and none at all where they do not move with ease and naturalness in the situation in which they find themselves. The records of Chinese students in the universities of the United States, England, Germany, France and Russia are proof of intellectual capacity to assimilate new ideas and alien knowledge. Intellectual vigor the Chinese surely have not lost.

Will China be able, then, to take over Western science and technology and make them its own; to industrialize, develop the country materially, organize socially, economically and politically in harmony with the demands of modernity; introduce sanitation, prevention of disease and universal education—in short, have a genuine renaissance into the twentieth century Occident? Will it take from the West that which it needs, translate what it takes into its own terms, transform it according to its own needs and genius, and acquire the West's command over nature while remaining Chinese in spirit? If so, with its population, its vast area, its resources and its racial qualities, which before have made it a dominant empire, will it be the most powerful nation on earth? What then?

This is the real problem of China. Whether it will be a republic or not, whether it can have efficient government or not, whether it can compose its internal quarrels or not, whether it recovers its alienated territories or not, and whether or not foreigners can continue to live in China with special privileges—these are relatively trivial. They are lesser and dependent questions. China has gone into the crucible, plunged in by forces stronger than itself and

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beyond its control. In what form will it emerge, and what effect will its impact have in turn on the rest of the world? In the answer Europe and America are involved less directly than China, but less only by degree. And by the answer light will be thrown on a question broader than China, the question of the nature of civilization.

CHAPTER II

THE SETTING: CHINA THAT WAS

BY the Chinese themselves China has been called the Middle Kingdom, denoting the center of the world from which power and light and civilizing influences radiated, for so China conceived itself, not without reason. By others it has more often been called Unchanging China and has stood as the symbol of unshakable conservatism, also not without reason. For in essentials China had changed little, if at all, in two thousand years.

Dynasties came and went. Tyrants had their day and passed. Under great military leaders—there have been such, notwithstanding a fallacious reputation for pacifism—China laid all of Eastern Asia under subjection and was in turn and more than once conquered by alien peoples, who were later absorbed or cast out. There were cycles of devastating wars and periods of ease and plenty, times of abjection and of grandeur. But no matter how turbulent the surface, the foundations of Chinese society remained stable and secure. The pattern of life repeated itself with only superficial variations. A peasant or craftsman in the nineteenth century lived very much as his forefathers a thousand years before him. A poet of the T'ang dynasty, suddenly translated into corporeal being again in the early nineteenth century and returned to his former haunts, would have noted a change in court man-

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ners, costumes, place names and a few superficial customs, an expansion in area and a shifting of political and economic centers; but he could have settled down to his former ways with very little effort of adjustment. The customs and habits of his descendants he would have found very largely his own, their education and store of knowledge very much what his had been, their values and fundamental ideas identical. In the interval the stream of life had had varying currents, but it had flowed on in the same course, and the banks were familiar in aspect.

To understand China and its background it is necessary to understand that there was no reason why it should have changed. No doubt the deliberate exaltation of the past, the application of "the wisdom of the sages of antiquity" as the sole criterion, and the foreclosure of all possibility of progress not envisaged five centuries before Christ did result in petrifying creative energy and deadening initiative. The spiritual growth of the race may even have been stunted and decadence accelerated. At any rate, intellectually China has needed ventilation for centuries. But, also, had there been every stimulus to innovation, the freest exercise of constructive and destructive criticism and the fullest knowledge of what had been achieved by other races, there was little change which China could have made to any marked advantage. Measured against the rest of Asia to this day and Europe to the end of the eighteenth century, China suffered little by comparison in point of culture, material development or popular welfare. It had little to learn, and there was not much it could have taken with profit.

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This is not to paint an idyllic picture of a Golden Age. There was none. Life in China fell far short even of its own standards as set by the sages. The portion of the masses was scanty. They were bled in wars, and in peace were at the mercy of those who held power. Poverty, disease and natural catastrophe took their toll. Injustice, cruelty and indifference to the welfare of the masses were accepted as the natural state. But all this was equally true everywhere else in the world, and an objective comparison of contemporary descriptions of China in what we call the Middle Ages with descriptions of Europe at the same time will show a balance in favor of China. It must be remembered that the humanitarian ideal, the ideal of the welfare of the commonalty, may always have been professed in the Occident, but not until the nineteenth century was it seriously regarded as a practicable aim and seriously advocated as concrete social policy.

Before that time, relatively the Chinese people came off better. If there were wars, there were fewer than in Europe. If the people were exploited by the ruling classes, the exploitation was no more cruel than in Europe. One need only remember the background of the peasant revolts in Europe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the social setting of the Reformation and the Thirty Years' War. The overwhelming majority of Chinese dwelt in ignorance, but in no greater proportion than in Europe. Possibly the spread of education was wider in China, and certainly learning was held in higher esteem by all classes of Chinese: it was, in fact, the sole token of excellence among them, a significant point of contrast

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between them and Occidental peoples of the time. China was helpless in the grip of nature, whether manifested in flood, drought, famine or plague, and that which men needed for subsistence was produced by their muscles and the sweat of the brow and with the help of only the rudest implements: but so it was in Europe, too. If anything, China was more advanced in technology. Probably the economic organization of China was more highly developed and more efficient. Of art, literature, philosophy, ethics, refinement of social intercourse, of all that lay on the upper levels of civilization, it is not necessary to speak. While comparison on those levels is futile, since subjective interpretations enter so largely, it is not disputed that there China's achievements can be counted among the greatest that man's spirit has wrought. In short, taking all classes together, the Chinese scheme of things yielded as much in human satisfactions—or as little, depending upon the point of view—as any other that co-existed with it until the discoveries of science and their application to production in the form of mechanical inventions not only added to man's stature but remoulded his world.

A dissection of Chinese society as it was until the last generation would show that its life blood flowed through three main arteries—the family, the guild and the government. Of these the least vital to existence was the government. In the sense in which government is understood in the West there never has been government in China. The failure to realize what this lack implied has been responsible for much of the strain between China

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and the Western Powers since they first came into direct relation at the end of the eighteenth century. The Chinese government may be described as a symbolical superstructure. It reigned, but it did not rule. It presided, but the nation was governed by the momentum of the past, by a self-enforcing body of traditions, hallowed by age and binding because they represented the common consent of the race and the deposits of race experience. Of laws there was and still is a minimum. The concept of regulations of conduct formally promulgated, subject to formal periodic revision and uniformly applied in all situations has always been alien to China. It was on traditions that Chinese institutions were founded, by traditions they functioned, and by traditions they were held firm. If partly for that reason Chinese society was too static, it also had the quality of its defects. It also was enduring. To the authority of tradition, independent of sanction by the repositories of official power and immune from modification by them, may be attributed the continuity of Chinese civilization and the homogeneity stamped on a people spread across a continent with meager facilities of communication, of differing racial origins, speaking a variety of dialects and inclined to cling tenaciously to regional and local customs. China was conquered by more vigorous and aggressive peoples. The conquerors, unable to relax the hold of tradition, conformed to it. In result, they were absorbed. They left an impress on the surface of the country, but they never penetrated to its heart. They never broke the rhythm of its life or disturbed its harmony. The Manchus forced

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the Chinese to wear queues for two and a half centuries, but they never touched China's ideas, beliefs or fundamental institutions.

It is said of the Chinese, usually in derogation, that except in the larger urban centers nine out of ten of them do not know yet that the monarchy gave way to a republic twenty years ago. This is not much exaggerated. The error lies in the derogatory note. Given their system, it was natural that they should not know. So long as the system held in its integrity, there was no reason for them to know. That was precisely one of its advantages—government touched the people so little they could be unaware even of what kind it was. The luxury is an enviable one, but also one that only a materially undeveloped and unindustrialized country can enjoy.

Theoretically China's form of government was an absolute monarchy. Actually it was a locally autonomous democracy. Theoretically the emperor wielded autocratic power. Actually the Chinese people enjoyed self-government to a degree seldom if ever attained by any other people not primitive. The Emperor appointed all officials and received taxes for the maintenance of his court. This, in practice, was the extent of his exercise of authority. For the rest, he was Son of Heaven, symbol of race unity, father of his people. His was the duty, then, to prostrate himself once a year on the marble Altar of Heaven as the sun rose, and alone with the Supreme Ancestor render an accounting for his people and his stewardship. For only Heaven was above him, but to Heaven he was responsible. So all groveled who came before

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him; but they were few. The others of the race went their way, dimly conscious that there was one like him, one exalted beyond all mankind, but otherwise unaffected by his existence. True, if he were cruel or degenerate, as many were, all those who came within his own radius suffered, but only those. Similarly, one who was extraordinarily high-minded and of high capacity could by personal example and stimulation of officialdom raise the level of government and improve the lot of the masses. But of the great majority who were at neither extreme of character it can be said that they were decorative and symbolical and little more.

In the Emperor's court were high officials—the members of the Imperial Boards—and their subordinates. Their functions were largely ceremonial or concerned with the court and capital. In the provinces were viceroys or governors, sometimes both; and under them administrative officials of provincial subdivisions—circuits, prefectures and local districts. In design it was a pyramidal hierarchy, duties devolving downward toward the base, responsibilities graduating upward to the apex. The actual government was at the base, in the district or *hsien*, comprising a walled town and the surrounding rural area, comparable roughly to a county. The *hsien* was the real unit of government and the administrative officer of the *hsien*, the magistrate, was the only real agent of government.

The magistrate was executive, legislative and judiciary. He assessed and collected taxes. He was responsible for the preservation of order. He supervised such few public

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works as there were and organized public relief, if there was any. He tried criminal cases and heard civil suits. He was responsible for action in whatever public emergencies arose and conducted community religious services or quasi-religious services such as the sacrifices at the Temple of Confucius. He was registrar of deeds and contracts and recorder of vital statistics. He was emperor in little, but in name rather than in fact. The inhabitants of his realm saw him, if at all, only in passing. Not one in ten of them ever had any direct dealing with him. For the rest he was only a name. Their one inescapable relation with him lay in the transmission of taxes.

As with emperors so with magistrates, one who was corrupt or unscrupulous could make himself felt disastrously. The test was in taxation. The magistrate was responsible for a certain quota, which was passed up to the official above him, and by him further up until the provincial quota was raised and transmitted to the capital. The imperial government levied a certain sum on each province, according to its wealth. To the provincial authorities were left the details of apportioning and raising the quota within the province. Similarly, the provincial authorities levied a certain amount on each hsien, leaving the details to the magistrate. Between the quota and the amount actually collected by the magistrate there was always a discrepancy in the magistrate's favor. There had to be, in order to supplement his less than nominal salary and meager allowance for staff and maintenance of headquarters. It was unofficial but legitimate, and not necessarily corrupt. In this discrepancy, however, lay

ample scope for the play of the personal equation. An honest magistrate made the surplus large enough to give him an ample reward for his services and perhaps a little more. A dishonest one could exploit to the full measure of his greed.

Against the magistrate there was no formal public redress. There was, however, a pragmatic check which operated slowly and wastefully although in the end surely. The right of revolution is almost at the foundation of Chinese political philosophy. The right of rulership derives from Heaven but by that fact carries with it an obligation to rule according to Heaven's will, which is beneficent. Failure to do so is *ipso facto* proof that Heaven's mandate is not being executed. Not only, then, is the mandate forfeit, but there almost devolves on those below a duty to evict the usurper. A dynasty which oppresses may and should be overthrown, a local official who abuses his power can and should be resisted and, if necessary, driven out. It is an oblique expression of the theory of responsible government, of government by consent. It was a system of checks and balances, but a clumsy one.

There was no way of implementing the theory except by direct action. In practical working a dynasty which had decayed and bred weak, dissolute and malevolent emperors—as was the case with every dynasty before its passing—could misrule for two or even three generations before popular discontent crystallized into protest and protest was galvanized into open revolt—until, that is, a leader emerged to marshal protest into organized force and overthrew the dynasty, setting up another in its stead. An

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unscrupulous magistrate could bilk his district for years until its inhabitants were goaded into acting effectively. In the interval there was suffering, and at the climax the waste and destruction of violence.

The climax was seldom reached in the smaller units of government. If a magistrate sought to extract too much from his district, there was informal protest, then formal protest, then a general strike of all trades, organized and directed by the guilds. The economic life of the community was suspended. Usually the magistrate was brought to terms and a compromise worked out in negotiations with representatives of the guilds and gentry. If he proved unregenerate, there was the last expedient of burning down his yamen, or official headquarters, over his head. The resort to extremes was seldom necessary. The theory of administrative responsibility graduating upward to the apex, through the prefect, the intendant of the circuit, the governor of the province and the imperial court, meant that so long as there was nothing untoward to report or nothing brought to light, there was nothing amiss and conditions were satisfactory. This in turn meant that the incumbent of each office had nothing to explain to the one above, and his position was secure. The inertia of bureaucratic procedure, here as everywhere sacred, was undisturbed.

The test was whether order was preserved. If it was, and the transaction between each official grade and the one above consisted only of the dispatch and receipt of taxes, all was well: government was good. If not, if there were disturbances, if there was a strike or open outbreak, in-

ertia was interrupted and explanations had to be made. There was a *prima facie* case against the magistrate, then against the prefect above him, and so on upward, according to the seriousness of the incident. The blame and the penalty were then passed on downward. The magistrate at least was made the scapegoat and was either transferred to a poor district or lost his position. He, no less than his charges, had therefore an incentive to self-restraint. There was for him, too, a premium on the maintenance of inertia. For practical purposes, then, there was a common bond between him and the inhabitants of his district. Both sides asked only to be let alone. The matter of taxes—the only positive relations between them—being determined by informal adjustment between how far he could go and how much they would endure, the business of government was discharged. It was a negative solution of the problem of the state but at least a working solution.

The real government of the country, that which we normally consider the function of the state, was exercised by the guild and the family. These were the basic institutions on which the structure of Chinese society rested. By them were codified and regulated the relations of men to one another in society—their group relations by the guilds, their relations as individuals by the family. They were extra-legal, unofficial, self-sustaining and autonomous. They were extra-legal, yet they had a quasi-official status, inasmuch as even the official government functioned through them. In the villages the magistrate dealt with the people through the village headman, who was either the head of the clan or the choice of the elders of

the clan. The headman was responsible to the magistrate for the good conduct of the village; on the other hand, so long as there was order the headman's authority within the village was not disputed by the magistrate in such matters as did not directly concern the government, which meant practically all the affairs of the villagers. In the city the magistrate dealt primarily with the representatives of the guilds, and also with the gentry or propertied and scholar classes; but there was as well a division into wards with headmen chosen by the inhabitants to represent them in dealings with officialdom. In the city also internal autonomy was recognized.

The guild was the organ of economic organization and control. Like its mediæval European counterpart it was an association of all those engaged in the same occupation in a community. There were merchant guilds, craft guilds and guilds of those in personal services—actors, barbers, wheelbarrow coolies, cooks, even beggars. Among the major economic divisions peasants alone were not so organized; the guild was exclusively urban. The guild's rule of its own trade was absolute. Here was no *laissez faire* but active authority and close regulation. This was positive government; not symbolical and nominal, but direct, all-pervading and obeyed.

First of all, the guild fixed prices. This was its most direct intervention in economic processes. There may have been competition in Chinese trade but not on the basis of price. The Chinese economic system could not support competition. The country was chronically overpopulated. The division of wealth produced under the limitations of

a non-mechanized economy was already attenuated. Poverty was the norm. The urban masses as well as the peasantry lived on a bare subsistence level, and not too securely on that level. Unrestrained competition in a struggle for survival would have submerged too many beneath the level. Better, then, that all have little than that a few have more and many nothing at all. It was restraint of trade but a restraint imposed by all for the benefit of the majority. The restraining agency was the guild. It fixed prices therefore and enforced them rigorously. On price-cutting the most stringent penalties were visited.

The guild decided all questions affecting the relations of employers and workers. It fixed wages, hours, working conditions. Procedure varied with different guilds, but the basis was always mutual consent reached by discussion and compromise. The close association possible under the conditions of production in household industry, with master and a few men working together at the same bench, perhaps all their lives, made consent emerge naturally and almost of itself, without the need of formal machinery of conciliation. Intimate personal relations narrowed the range of disagreement, which at the most was not wide, and softened its edge. Each side knew intimately the needs of the other; they were much the same for both. In the majority of cases master and man had enough for subsistence, the master perhaps a little more; but on the whole the returns of production yielded too little for much of controversy. The exceptions were the more prosperous shops in the merchant guilds, where the distinction between employer and worker was wider, because

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there was capital invested and profits were greater. In addition to the personal relation of worker and employer there was another factor which tended to minimize the labor problem, if not to eliminate it. This was the small element of variation in the economic system. It was relatively static. Economically no less than politically the country was divided into small units by lack of communications. Production was for a local market only, and there was little change in basic conditions—in demand and supply, in price or in quantity and kind of commodities produced. There was little occasion, then, for changes in wages or in the relations between employers and workers generally. A rough index of the few necessities of a workingman's family—principally rice in the South and grain in the North—could be informally calculated, and wages conformed fairly closely to price movements in these commodities.

Adjustments of the wage scale in a trade were made for the whole community by the guild. As everywhere else, they usually followed on demands for more pay and the initiative was taken by the workers; and as everywhere else, the employers resisted. But the question was settled as one of concern to the whole guild, an organization consisting of both masters and men. It was settled at a guild meeting with both sides participating equally. Only in extreme cases, which were infrequent, did they separate into opposing camps, and then there was usually a strike. But in the nature of things a strike could not last long. Everybody connected with a trade in a community was a member of the guild and a strike meant a

complete cessation of the trade. Strike-breaking was impossible, as there were no strike-breakers. There was a premium, then, on compromise or quick settlement.

Usually it was the former, and the procedure was much as the writer witnessed it many years ago in the Chinese city adjoining the International Settlement at Shanghai. There was a wage dispute among the carpenters and a strike had been called. A meeting had been summoned at the guild hall on the day that it was to go into effect. The hall seethed. The meeting opened, a bedlam. For a few minutes it settled to decorum, with appointed spokesmen presenting the case for each side. But the atmosphere was too overpowering, the Chinese habit of extracting the full histrionic value of every situation too irresistible. The speakers became rhetorical, then dramatic, then passionate. They were interrupted, not only by opponents but by supporters, too full of words for restraint. Soon more than one was talking at a time, then many at a time. Both volume of noise and tensivity of passion waxed to a crescendo. Nothing appeared to be left except physical violence, when suddenly servants entered bringing tea and cakes and sweetmeats. As suddenly the scene died down and was metamorphosed into an amicable, gossiping party. Tea things were cleared and the debate was resumed. It moved quickly again from decorum to passion, rose to crescendo, to the border of fracas; then when all hope seemed gone for any conclusion but catastrophe, certainly for a peaceful settlement, a compromise emerged and was accepted. The men were given a raise but less than they demanded. The meeting ended pleas-

antly and the next day there was work as usual. In Western eyes, a curious labor dispute. Whatever the specific method may have been, settlement was always by compromise. Most often it was reached in informal discussion, before it even attained the proportion of a dispute. And on the whole wages conformed fairly closely to the cost of subsistence, as subsistence was counted by Chinese standards. It was a solution of the labor problem through paternalism rather than democracy, since after all the employer had the preponderant weight in decision, but it was also a fairly efficient and humane solution.

Probably the guild's most important function was as legislature and judiciary for the economic system. It framed and promulgated the regulations of production and distribution. It fixed the rules of trade, standards of weights and measures, conditions of credit, methods of financial settlement, procedure in bankruptcy, and trade practices generally. These rules varied with every local guild, which made them to suit its own needs, but taken as a whole they constituted a body of commercial and civil law. It is commonly said by foreign business men in China and repeated by foreign writers that there is no commercial law in China, wherefore foreigners can live there only under the jurisdiction of their own courts and consuls. The misunderstanding springs from the Occidental conception of the state as the only source of authority. The Chinese had law. They did have regulation of their external relations according to fixed codes enforced equally on those whose activities fell within their scope. But it was not government law. Just there may have been its

advantage, that it grew naturally out of the conditions that it covered, was shaped to conform to those activities and always lay in the control of those whom it immediately affected. If it was less mystic and awesome, it may also have been a more workable instrument. It was preëminently a practical system of law—law intimately related to reality—which cannot always be said of the law in countries much more highly organized and consciously evolved.

The guild not only made the law but administered it. It acted as commercial court. Virtually all trade disputes were settled by the guild. Each one had a committee which sat on cases. These were arbitration boards rather than courts, but their judgments had all the force of a court's. The instances in which they were not accepted as final were rare. In the first place, there was the social and moral compulsion of the guild, which was irresistible. In the second place, there was no other course but resorting to the magistrate's court, which went counter to the instincts of all Chinese. For long experience had taught them the folly of becoming involved with officials. The result was delay, trafficking with petty functionaries, probably the giving of bribes and not necessarily just judgment in the end. In practice merchants took their disputes to the guild and abided by the decision. If there was a dispute between members of different guilds, the committee of a neutral guild was usually called on to rule. It was justice without solemnity or majesty, but at least as expeditious, as cheap, as efficient and as equitable in its working as the system of formal courts in what are

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called modern countries. The judicial functions of the guild included also the assessment of penalties on members for infractions of guild rules. These penalties ranged from small fines to expulsion, but from them there was neither escape nor appeal.

Finally, the guild served as the buffer between business and government. As already stated, it was the channel of communication between the government and the urban world. When the magistrate of the district which included a town had measures to propose affecting the town he could and usually did communicate first with the representatives of the guilds. This was especially true if the measures involved new taxation. If the guild representatives approved they could take unofficial responsibility for enforcement of the proposals. At least they gave the ratification of public opinion. On the other hand, the collective might of business could be arrayed in opposition against a magistrate who sought to run too callously counter to public opinion or who sought to exploit too rapaciously. It has already been explained that government officials were theoretically omnipotent but in practice did not dare face the threat of a boycott of business. It was the pragmatic check in government. Moreover, the individual, theoretically helpless, was protected against the official, theoretically all-powerful, because back of him stood his guild.

Guilds varied considerably in organization and administration, but in all of them determination of policies and action lay with an elective board, generally serving for a year. In emergencies, however, special meetings of the

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whole membership could be called. Unless the guild was large and prosperous, which the great majority were not, the details of administration were carried out by the officers. Those which could afford it had paid staffs. Officers were chosen by election, all members being eligible. Almost always, election fell to richer or more influential employers, first, because that is a natural tendency and, second, because they alone had the education and leisure which were necessary qualifications. Guild expenses were met by dues assessed in various ways. The more prosperous had imposing, even magnificent guild halls, the smaller had only meeting-places. The guild membership included literally all engaged in any gainful occupation; from this fact the guild derived its power. There was no formal compulsion on a man to join the guild. But in the first place, it was inexorable custom; in the second place, the advantages of solidarity were manifold; in the third place, none would do business with one who was not a guild member. The situation, however, never arose. Membership was literally all-inclusive.

This in short, was government: law-giver, administrator, judge. It exercised all the functions of a state. It was responsible government, and in essentials democratic. And in contrast with what we have conventionally accepted as the government of China and erroneously taken as the measure of China's capacity for managing its collective affairs, government by the guilds was effective, efficient, responsive to the needs of the governed, subject to the consent of the governed, adaptable to changing conditions and extraordinarily honest. If one disabuse one-

self of the idea that only the state can be an agency of government, this was even by modern Western standards singularly good government.¹

As the guild was to the economic system, so the family was in the broader human relations. The family was not only the real organ of government in the fullest sense, namely, that it ordered the most important relations, but it was the heart of Chinese society. From it and back to it flowed the life blood of the whole system. Thence arose strength, vitality, longevity. That which conduced to the proper functioning of the family was deemed healthy, that which weakened it tabu. All values were determined according as they affected the welfare of the family. When this is stated one of the main basic differences between the Chinese and ourselves is stated. Our own scheme of things is centered on the individual, and individual welfare is the highest good. We think in terms of the individual. With them the individual does not matter, so long as the stream of the clan, and thereby the race, is carried on. Hence what seems to us so often as callousness, the apparent insensitiveness to the suffering of individuals in famines, epidemics, wars or isolated incidents, which, repellent as it may sometimes be to us, is only a statement of the comparative worth put on the in-

¹ Material on the guilds is scanty. The standard work, a very fragmentary one, is Morse, H. B. *The Guilds of China*. Another much-quoted source is Macgowan, D. J., *Chinese Guilds or Chambers of Commerce and Trades Unions*, in the *Journal of North-China Branch, Royal Asiatic Society*, 1888-1889. A much more recent and by far the most comprehensive account is Burgess, John Stewart, *The Guilds of Peking*. As the title indicates, it deals with one city alone, and that one a rather untypical city, but the details are minute and well marshaled. This is the first really adequate study of the Chinese guild.

dividual. Hence also the narrow scope for what can be called self-expression, freedom of choice or personal initiative, and the low esteem in which their exercise is held. Self was only contributory; the social unit was the family.

The city, the province and the country counted for less than the individual. Hence what we miscall lack of patriotism, or, rather, the lack of what we call patriotism. There was no place for it in the Chinese scheme. The nation could command no loyalties, for it was not a grouping which had any identity in Chinese consciousness. It was too vague a concept to call forth a definite response of any kind. There was at most a tenuous and abstract sense of racial kinship. For the same reason there was none of what we call social consciousness, a lack much more seriously and concretely felt, now visible in China's helplessness before disaster or disorganization. In short, the point of integration for the Chinese people, their natural grouping and the centering of their attachments was the family. By this fact is explained much that is otherwise inexplicable but is often attributed to national deficiencies or mystic, undefinable traits loosely called Oriental.

The family must be considered not in the Occidental definition as father, mother and their children, but as it signified in China—father, mother, sons, the sons' wives and their children, perhaps also the father's brother and his wife and their children, possibly three or four generations in collateral branches, all living together around three sides of a common courtyard. They lived theoreti-

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cally under a patriarchy, under the rule of the father or eldest male of the household. But as the theory of absolutism in government was moderated by the fact, so in every-day living the father's autocratic power was considerably diluted by the mother's influence—sometimes entirely dissolved. In larger families it was more likely to be wielded by an informal council of elders. The larger family was itself usually just a branch of a clan. The distinction between family and clan is not easy to draw. Often it was unclear in reality, and sometimes the two merged. The huge majority of the population of China lives in villages.² A large proportion of villages are inhabited by one clan and a majority by only two or three. In some only one surname is to be found, in most only two or three. Each individual family in the village or clan—that is, the larger family in the Chinese sense—lives in its own compound and has full control over its intimate affairs, but there is an area of common interest which is communally administered. Here village and clan coincide. This common interest includes the ancestral hall, where the ancestral tablets are kept and formal ceremonies of obeisance made at stated intervals; temple lands, which are the property of the clan and the yield of which goes to maintain the ancestral hall, as well as a school and burial fund for the indigent; and, in addition, public affairs arising in the village.

The family had full control over its members. By it was decided what each should do, whether he should be

² The standard work on the village is Kulp, D. H., *Country Life in South China*. Less valuable is Smith, A. H., *Village Life in China*.

educated or not, what occupation he should follow, whom he should marry and when. Property was held and managed in common; no piece of land could be bought or sold without the consent of the elders. There was almost no contingency in the life of an individual which was not decided upon by a family council or was at least subject to family veto. Conversely, the family as a whole was responsible for the conduct of its members to the point of collective liability for the acts of any one of them. An agreement made by one was binding on all. Minor infractions of the public peace or welfare or offenses against the persons or property of others were dealt with by the family. There was an official criminal code but it was seldom if ever invoked. The Chinese people as a whole were unaware of its existence. The magistrate pretended not to see what was not brought to his attention—whatever was privately settled to the satisfaction of all concerned. Whatever, therefore, concerned the members of a single family was automatically settled within that family. Whatever concerned the members of more than one was settled by private negotiations between the two families or through a neutral arbitrator. Only in rare cases, such as an attempt at revolution, a flagrant assault on the welfare of a community or a conspicuous murder, did government agencies intervene. But when they did, not only the culpable individual but his whole family could be held to expiation. Likewise, in a civil dispute a claim for damages could be levied against the whole family. If the Chinese are conspicuously what is elsewhere called a law-abiding people, it was by the

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operation of this principle of responsibility that a code of morals was given vitality and binding force beyond written laws. It was this that animated the body of traditions that in practice governed China in place of laws and officials, and it was by the family, therefore, that these traditions were conserved and enforced. In a measure this is true everywhere; the fundamental concepts of a race have always been implanted during childhood by the influences of the home. But in China it was a much more positive function, exercised more consciously and in more detailed and specific application.

The theory of collective responsibility has one more aspect, an important one. The family organization was also a form of social insurance. What the individual loses in freedom of will he gains in protection. The collective resources of the family always stand behind him. If he is out of work he is lodged and fed, if he is ill he is taken care of, as a matter of right, not charity. It is his legitimate claim, since his possessions and earnings are in the common pool. When he is old he must be taken care of by his children, who do so automatically, for he still has his place in the home. There is poverty in China, bleak, bitter poverty, as everywhere in the East; but there is less of insecurity than in the richer, industrialized West. If there is insecurity it is only that of man before the irresistible might of nature.

The implicit obedience to elders and subordination to group-will on which family authority rested and without which the family system could not be maintained derived from the first article in China's moral code, its highest

law—ancestor worship and the corollary, filial piety. The term ancestor worship carries connotations of superstition. These are unfortunate and misleading. However ancestor worship may be construed in the acts and fears of the ignorant, its origins and significance are at the other extreme from the primitive. It is fundamentally the veneration of the principle of continuity—continuity of the race—of the unity of past and present, and extension of present into future. The dead are not lost but detached. Not to do them respect—by the proper sacrifices before the ancestral tablets—is to cast them off into oblivion, to insult one's line and isolate it in the universe. By the ignorant, of course, this is translated as meaning that the ancestral spirits will return to punish them. Not to worship ancestors is the highest sin, to be repaid with ostracism, as the highest sin is everywhere. To disgrace oneself is to disgrace one's forebears. On the other hand, to carry oneself so as to win honors is to confer merit on one's forebears.³ It is illustrative that exceptional distinctions awarded an individual by the emperor could automatically carry with them posthumous elevation in rank for his ancestors as if they were still living. In sum, ancestor worship is the ceremonialized consciousness of the unity of time.

There follow from this, certain practical consequences which have stamped Chinese life. From the necessity of insuring progeny to carry on the worship has come the premium on large families, especially many sons, since daughters on marrying leave the household and hence-

³ Leong, Y. K., and Tao, L. K., *Village and Town Life in China*, p. 27.

forth belong to the families of the men they marry. Early marriage, procreation without regard to the health of women or the economic status of the family, the taking of concubines in order to have more children, overpopulation and all that flows therefrom, overcrowding in some areas and insufficient population in others—all these are therefore inevitable. Mencius says: "There are three things which are unfilial, and to have no posterity is the greatest of these."⁴ The warning has been observed perhaps more completely than any other in the Canons which are the repository of Chinese wisdom.

The living expression of ancestor worship is filial piety. As ancestor worship is the central law, so filial piety is the highest virtue, and, theoretically at least, men are measured according to their possession of this virtue. The legendry of the race gathers around famous acts of sacrifice for parents. This is China's equivalent of the Honest Abe Lincoln and truthful George Washington saga. It is the moral equivalent of heroism. And in every-day Chinese home life the degree of obedience which is exacted by parents and unquestioningly given by children, even long after maturity, is one of the aspects of life in China to which the foreigner finds it most difficult to adjust his point of view. Of almost no moral law in any civilization can it be more confidently said that it is not honored only in the breach. In fact it has become so deeply ingrained, so firmly interwoven in the unconscious, as to constitute almost a biologic principle. One of its subsid-

⁴ The Works of Mencius. Book IV, Chapter 26, translation of J. Legge, *The Chinese Classics*.

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itary forms is respect for age as age, another fact which colors thought and customs. China is no land of youth or of innovation. It is not an accident or a biological trait that experimentation and the critical spirit and hospitality to the new as new have not been conspicuous attributes.

— This, then, was China. A country predominantly agricultural, with a population predominantly peasant; a chain of loosely-linked villages, each self-sustaining, autonomous and for all practical purposes independent, living its own life unaffected by anything outside its horizon, regulating its humble affairs according to the lights of its inhabitants and guided by customs handed down from the forefathers, traditions moulded by the slow rubbing of time and a culture filtering down to the mass from an intellectual aristocracy above, a class of scholars and literati honored as no comparable class has ever been anywhere else. The towns were trading centers and manufactories for the peasantry, with production by handicraft or with the aid of simple implements and on the small scale of the household—a few rooms serving as home and warehouse and store, a master and one or two journeymen and an apprentice or two performing all the operations of an industry from purchase of raw materials to sale and delivery of the finished product.

Whether in the fields or in the towns, the work of producing the bare necessities of life was long, harsh and unalleviated, a struggle with matter unrelieved by external aids—as it was and is everywhere if power machinery is lacking, which is to say everywhere in the world until a few generations ago. To the contemporary Ameri-

can mind, taking labor-saving devices for granted, this appears revolting and beneath human dignity. The spectacle of men as beasts of burden, bending all day at loads a machine could transport in an hour, plodding from sunrise to late at night at tasks done for us in a few minutes with the turn of a wheel, is at first sight depressing. But there is another side. If work is unremitting and often cruel, it is also undriven, fairly leisurely and at a pace unforced by something impersonal and external as a machine. It does not commit the worker completely to servitude to something inanimate and outside himself. He retains a personal relation to his work, as he does to his employer. His work is harder than the factory hand's but less monotonous; his work is more inhuman but he himself remains more human. For the boon of emancipation from drudgery and the greater productivity which the machine confers it also exacts a price.

Finally, emphasis must be laid again on a few distinguishing characteristics. First of all, self-government. Politically the Chinese were a free people. So far as a people can be immune from external interference and authority, they were immune. If they were ruled, as indeed they were, it was by custom and tradition sanctioned by themselves through time and enforced by agents of their own selection. Their institutions were self-functioning, by momentum. Second, was the influence of an organic culture embellishing, fortifying and perpetuating these institutions by a system of education which formed the habits and thought even of the illiterate. The stuff of this education was the body of classics in which the Confu-

cian doctrine was preserved—essentially a system of ethics but also, though secondarily, a compendium of history, a literature and a philosophy. To pass the state examinations it was necessary to have a knowledge of these classics almost to the point of literal memorization. And passing the state examinations was the only door opening on a career in the government service, which, despite the small degree of power residing in the government as government, was nevertheless the career most prized by the Chinese people. For it conferred the stamp of the elect. It was at once the mark of aristocracy, by the only test which the Chinese recognized, that of culture, and the signet of a ruling class, by the only evidence of superiority which they recognized, that of intellectual cultivation. And the mark of distinction which every family coveted, which every village took for its claim to civic pride, was one member who had passed the examinations.

Of this education it may be said that it came in recent times to be a mere adjunct to careerism and a rigid, sterile classicism. It had ceased to impart a living inspiration. It was a dead, frozen formalism. But also, judged by its results through the long sweep of China's history, it had served to diffuse through the Chinese people the meaning of their history, the essentials of their beliefs, the spirit of their institutions and a flavor of high ceremony and gentle courtesy. A Chinese may be poor, ragged, unwashed, unkempt, underfed and illiterate, and yet have poise, dignity, courtesy and an intuitive feeling for carrying off a situation with ease and naturalness. He need not be born to high estate to have what is known as breed-

ing. It is not an accident, for he has "breed." Though the printed page be a mystery to him, that which his country calls education has shaped him. This education, then, has first of all provided a governing class which was trained, cultivated and, for its purpose, efficient. It was, besides, despite its deficiencies, an intellectual discipline, a philosophy and a code of manners. It produced scholars and gentlemen—men with a sense of responsibility, of noblesse oblige and of punctilio—and formulated these two as the ideals of the race. And no other race has more nearly approximated the attainment of its ideals than the Chinese have theirs.

CHAPTER III

THE WEST STRIKES

ON the foundations just described China stood through the long course of its history down to our own times. Vast movements there may have been on the surface but, as I have said, without any essential changes at the foundations. The spirit of the life of the people, their institutions and their beliefs remained the same. At least it may be said that from the formative period to the recent past there was a consistent organic development on an underlying unity.

China's origins are too dim to be strictly defined. There are legendary accounts of mythical progenitors and semi-mythical emperors, all-wise, benevolent and omnipotent father-kings who invented the seasons and fire and cooking and medicine and cultivation of the soil and the making of fishing-nets and the like. Probably they never lived but are the personalization of stages in the evolution of the primitive tribes that gathered in the region of the Yellow River approximately 4,500 years ago.¹ The first clear figures emerge in the twelfth century B.C. with the beginning of the Chou dynasty, while the first authentic date is 776 B.C., verified from an eclipse of the sun recorded in the Book of History. Confucius, who lived in the sixth century B.C., could already find a body of his-

¹ Cf. Wilhelm, R., *A Short History of Chinese Civilization*, Chap. I.

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torical data, of poetry, ceremonial rites and philosophical concepts to compile, edit and systematize. He could already idealize a golden past, remonstrate on his decadent days and plead for a more proper observance of precedents. Already there had been a crystallization into something formed, if not fixed.

China's history as history need not detain us long here. It has been adequately dealt with in numerous volumes² and is not vital to our purpose. There was, as everywhere, a coalescing of inchoate tribes into centers of population and power in a quasi-feudal system and then a struggle for survival among these. By the twelfth century B.C. a few strong states had emerged. Of these the strongest was the state of Chou, which gave its name to the dynasty that, nominally at least, ruled the territory then comprising China for almost a thousand years. It was in this period that China's civilization took the definite form it has worn ever since. But in the last few centuries of the Chou dynasty there were intermittent and devastating wars among the states until the state of Ch'in produced a conqueror who succeeded in beating into unity the loose system of independent and semi-independent states and under the name of the Shih Huang Ti, the first Supreme Emperor, set up a single empire, subsequently to be known as China. With all its vicissitudes, its conquests by less civilized and more virile peoples from the north and its recurrent internal wars and periods of dissolution, this

² For the best treatment of early Chinese history see Hirth, F., *The Ancient History of China*. For general histories see Li Ungbing, *Outlines of Chinese History*; Gowen, H. H., *An Outline History of China*, or Cordier, H., *Histoire générale de la Chine* (Paris, 1920).

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empire has managed to survive until today, an integral, basically homogeneous empire. And even today, when it is being emaciated by an endemic plague of civil wars and there appear to be as many lines of internecine hostility as there are provinces, it remains a single empire, an integral unit.

The intervening period is the familiar human tale: wars, wars, recovery, then more wars—the melancholy procession of every race. There is a succession of dynasties, each founded by a strong man, dwindling in vitality with each of his successors, becoming decadent and at length degenerate, until the country drifts into anarchy and despair. Then the dynasty is overthrown, another set up and the same circle described until that one in turn is displaced. In the meantime China extends its influence through its cultural superiority and its material sway through aggressive emperors who built up an invincible army and an imperial administrative machine. At the apex of its might its power overshadowed all of Eastern Asia, at times it was in its puissance unrivaled in the world, and it must be numbered among the great empires of all time. But also China was always under threat from the north and at intervals over a period of two thousand years had to fight against the rugged barbarians of Mid-Asia—Tartars, Huns, Mongols, Manchus. They were not always repelled.

Twice the whole of China was overrun and subdued—in the thirteenth century by the Mongol hordes led by Kublai Khan after his grandfather Genghis Khan had laid all of Asia and much of Europe under subjection and

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ruin, and in the seventeenth century by the Manchus. But China's strength has been its ability to devitalize its conquerors and then absorb them, probably because they have always been primitive and the first, sudden contact with a highly refined culture has enervated them. Not until the West came in force had China been beset by an enemy who combined brute strength with the resources of civilization. Furthermore, China's sheer mass has been a bulwark. The most violent pressure at any one point was dissipated at any distance from the point. Only now that China is becoming highly organized and nerve centers are forming is it becoming possible to reduce it to helplessness by touching a sensitive area. The more complex the organization of a country the more vulnerable it is. At any rate the Mongols lasted only a hundred years in China. The Manchus maintained their dynasty until 1911, but only by virtue of two facts. Two of the Manchu emperors, K'ang Hsi and Ch'ien Lung, were among the great rulers of all time, and they ruled for more than a hundred years. And they not only conformed to Chinese civilization but made it their own. After the beginning of the nineteenth century the Manchus were fast decaying and even in the upper levels of administration their control was being diluted by Chinese. And with both the Manchus and Mongols there was scarcely an indentation on the surface of Chinese life after the slaughter incident to the original invasions.

Until comparatively modern times, China's relations with the outer world, aside from that part of it which touched its own borders and its security, were remote

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and sporadic. There were relations, however. Only in comparatively modern times did China deliberately seek seclusion, and then only as a matter of defense and not as a preference for seclusion as such. What it really sought was an artificial barrier against an importunate intruder, instinctively recognizing that his coming boded no good. By that time relations with the West, which meant Europe, involved for the East the kind of "entanglements" that the founders of the American republic feared. For China it involved more than the danger of becoming a pawn in Europe's blood-feuds. It involved also the danger of laying itself open to an aggressor whose ambitions were unbounded and for China fatal.

Until the Middle Ages there was desultory intercourse with the outer world. There was trade with the Roman Empire, both by the overland route across Asia and later along the southern coast and up by land.³ Trade with the Arabs began about the fourth century, a colony of Arab traders having established itself at Canton. Individual Chinese travelers ventured into Central Asia and India and occasional expeditions were officially sent for exploration. It was through the interchange of travelers with India that Buddhism was brought to China. In the seventh century the Nestorian Christians came from Persia. They were hospitably received, were allowed to establish churches and propagate their faith, and were encouraged by the T'ang dynasty emperors, according to their own version, as given in the memorial tablet unearthed in Shensi province. So also were Moslems allowed to

³ Williams, E. T., *China Yesterday and Today*, pp. 339-343.

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come, settle and live by their faith. In the thirteenth century Marco Polo the Venetian came to China with his father and uncle. They were not only permitted to remain but given honors, Marco Polo being appointed governor of Yangchow. The *Travels* of Marco Polo are a classic, but they have more than literary significance. For he was of Venice in its grandeur, yet he was awed by the splendors, the magnificence, wealth, efficient organization, good government and "law and order" of the Chinese cities. In all that our use of the word "advanced" connotes, China was advanced, just as in all that our use of the word "backward" connotes, England and France and Italy were backward until the divergence produced by the industrial revolution. It is only in the last hundred years that civilization has come to mean machine production and sanitation. With the contemporary-mindedness which appears to be a product of the speed with which we live we have come to take the present as an absolute and eternal criterion. We have forgotten that as between China or India today and Europe of two hundred years ago there was little to choose in what we like to call "advancement," and that even by the material tests of what we call advanced, as between China and Europe in the sixteenth century, if there was any difference it was in China's favor.

It was the discovery of the sea route to the East that opened up direct relations with Europe. The Portuguese came first, two vessels arriving in Canton in 1517. They conducted themselves unexceptionably and were allowed to trade. They asked permission to send an envoy to the

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court at Peking. Permission was finally granted and the envoy received with proper diplomatic courtesies at Peking. But the first Portuguese ships were followed by another, the crew of which comported itself more in accordance with the practices of the early Western adventurers to the East—that is, with barbarity. For the first white men to arrive, the Eastern ports from the Indian coast to China were merely fair game for plunder; and they plundered savagely, and, where necessary, killed. When the rule was applied to China the Chinese reversed their attitude of hospitality. As soon as Peking was apprized of what had happened in Canton the Portuguese envoy was made a prisoner and sent back to Canton in chains, where he died. But it was not an act of Xenophobia or of hostility to foreign trade. It was an act of reprisal which any country would have taken. But the hostility developed later, as a matter of logical deductions, also quite naturally. The Portuguese were excluded from all but one point on the extreme southern coast.

The Portuguese were followed by the Dutch and Spanish, who also were excluded, as later were the British. The Russians, who have always understood the Asiatic better, had more success. At the end of the seventeenth century they concluded a treaty with China giving them at least partial entry. In the meantime Jesuit missionaries had arrived, followed later by members of other Catholic orders. With its traditional tolerance in matters of religious belief China permitted them to remain and proselyte for their faith. Since the early Jesuits were also men of considerable scientific attainments and won respect by their

learning, they were given the protection of the court and honored by official position. But later the different orders fell into the usual European doctrinal disputes and carried them over into Chinese affairs. For one thing they insisted on enforcing their own respective interpretations of ancestor worship on the Chinese, associated though that was with what was deepest in Chinese philosophical belief. Also, they began to capitalize their influence with Chinese converts against their opponents, and finally on the appeal of both sides the Pope issued decrees binding the conduct of Chinese. Because they resented this arrogation of authority in China by an alien sovereign and also because the experience of Japan was showing how easily religious proselyting was taking on political aspects and merging into political power, the Chinese took warning and suppressed the activities of the orders. But again, it was an act of self-defense, a measure for security, rather than an expression of anti-Christian prejudice. To the contrary, the Chinese attitude toward Christianity and Christian proselyting has been throughout singularly tolerant—more tolerant, indeed, than Christians have been to one another. Such objections as Chinese have felt have turned on the political pretensions which Christian missionaries have sought to assume and actually did assume after China became helpless.

All that went before the eighteenth century was but a prelude, however. For then England became conscious of imperial destiny and began to respond to an inner drive for expansion. Implanting itself in India, it naturally threw out roots toward China, the fertile soil adjoining.

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Already enough was known about China to breed a conviction that it was a fabulously rich field for exploitation. The British East India Company, which had a franchise for the Indian trade, became the agent of expansion to China. Backed by the British government and British naval power, the East India Company pressed for the right to trade in China. The Chinese would make no concession of principle but by way of practical compromise set aside Canton as a foreign trading port and prescribed a curious *modus operandi*. A small number of Chinese merchants—thirteen, eventually—were given official franchise to buy and sell to foreigners. With these alone—the co-hongs, as they were called—could foreigners have relations of any kind. They themselves were permitted to live only in a small restricted quarter almost as prisoners and then only for a part of the year, nor could they bring their families with them.

It was a compromise which served only as an irritant. It was inconvenient, inefficient, uneconomic and humiliating. And it only served to emphasize the exclusion in effect against the whole outer world. English pride was wounded and English profit reduced, a combination which always works inexorably toward one end in international relations. The English became insistent. They formally demanded the right of full intercourse as with other nations—the right to trade anywhere in the country and to have diplomatic representatives received with appropriate dignity in the capital. The Chinese rigorously refused, and added the bite of insult to the refusal. Such replies as they made were in a tone of rebuke to pre-

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sumptuous barbarians. In any case they were unyielding in their determination to remain closed against Europe.

Abstractly the issue was the right of isolation, the right of any nation to shut itself off from the world. On the abstract issue China was manifestly wrong, of course. It was seeking to run counter to every natural world tendency and, had it succeeded, would doubtless have retarded world progress, which is toward unity. To a certain extent, also, its motives were indefensible. It was acting out of ignorance of the world, insularity and a complacent acceptance of its own superiority. The last was not wholly unjustified. For one thing, China had had no experience of another people which was culturally its equal, and there was nothing in the conduct of the white men who came to Chinese shores to induce any belief that they were exceptions to its experience. Further, China was just then, in the eighteenth century, at the crown of one of its ascending curves. There is hardly any exaggeration in saying that in power, area, size of population, prosperity and level of cultural attainment no European country was its superior and few were its equal. There was some factual basis for its arrogance.

China's motives were also logical and therefore defensible. It was clear enough from the evidence of conduct that the white man's aim was conquest. As the eighteenth century waned and the nineteenth began India stood out stark as the foreshadowing of the future of any land on which the white man set his foot in numbers. Further, it was clear that wherever the European went he carried his European hostilities with him and was

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prepared to use any neutral ground on which he happened to be standing for his battlefield. From the beginning the Europeans in China subordinated even their ambitions in China to the desire to score each other off. Each betrayed the other to the Chinese, each intrigued against the other with the Chinese, each sought to remain but sought even more assiduously to have the other barred out. What more logical than that the Chinese should have cried a plague on all their houses?

China had an even more valid motive. In the abstract the issue was isolation and the right to trade. But the abstraction was concealed to the Chinese eye by a very tangible element. For in translation the principle of the right to trade became opium. The purpose of the white man, the English in particular, in breaking down China's walls was to enter the more easily with opium. The East India Company was growing opium in India and needed a market. It had discovered one in China. Through the narrow slit opened at Canton, by 1800 it had pushed through sufficient opium to make the drug habit general enough for the Chinese government to have taken alarm and forbidden the importation of opium. The prohibition was vain. A loosely organized government could not enforce it, for there was too little administrative machinery, a Chinese vested interest was being built up in opium and the foreign traders poured the opium in. And simultaneously they pressed for the right to level all barriers. The more firmly they pressed, the more obdurately the Chinese refused. Both were right. The foreigners stood on the principle; and they were right. The Chinese saw that

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what was involved was an offensive traffic which threatened to—and later did—degrade the race; and they were right.

There could be only one culmination to such a situation and it came. The particular incident that brought it was not so important as the fact that it had to come. As events turned out, the incident actually turned on opium. An official dispatched by the government to deal at once with the foreigners and with opium did so precipitately. He confiscated the entire stock of opium in foreign warehouses in Canton and destroyed it. The British declared war. The result was inevitable in any case. It was impossible to expect the pride of powerful European states to brook ostracism as outcasts and inferiors, ostracism scornfully, even insultingly manifested—especially by a country which has no navy.

This is not only historical analysis after the fact. It was discernible also at the time. No better summary of the almost fatalistic character of the complication of issues can be given than that of Sir Rutherford Alcock, British Consul in Shanghai, writing in a formal memorandum to his government, on January 19, 1849:⁴

“The Chinese view of the opium trade and our agency in it forms perhaps the chief obstacle to our taking that high ground with the rulers, and good position with the people, which the extension of our commercial interests demands. Let us look, then, to the opium traffic and the influence it actually exercises upon our position in China.

⁴ Quoted in Michie, Alexander, *The Englishman in China*, Vol. I, p. 417.

"It is no question here whether opium should be classed in the category of medicines, stimuli or fatal poisons; the Chinese have decided that for themselves, and regard it only as a poison, and the British as the great producers, carriers and sellers of the drug, to our own great profit and their undoubted impoverishment and ruin. Nor does their conviction end here: they believe to maintain this traffic we made war and dictated a humiliating peace, and that we are prepared to do so again, if they ventured on any interference to its prejudice.

"These opinions may be false or true in their foundation, that is not the question, but, what is the influence they are calculated to exercise? Hostility and distrust can alone be traced to this source. No other feelings flow from it, and the consequences will meet us at every turn of our negotiations, in our daily intercourse, and every changing phase of our relations. As it overshadows with a sinister influence the whole field of our political action, so must it be seriously taken into account and calculated upon as an adverse element in all we attempt in China.

"Accepted as *un fait accompli*, the best means of neutralizing and counteracting its bad effects are alone to be considered, since the enormous capital, large revenue, and inseparable connection of our legitimate trade with opium as a means of laying down funds in China, involved in the traffic, precludes all idea of its cessation or removal."

The last paragraph cannot be overemphasized. It contains almost every factor in the origin of Chinese-Western relations. With the returns of the opium traffic Eng-

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land paid for the silk and tea it imported from China. At the foundation of the trade with China, this relation which involved a principle, was opium. So also was opium at the foundation of the British imperial structure then soaring and spreading in the East. Again Sir Rutherford Alcock says, in an official report to his government on trade in 1845: ⁵

“While the cultivation and sale of opium are sanctioned and encouraged for the purposes of revenue in India, and those who purchase the drug, deriving wealth and importance from the disposal of it in China, are free from blame, it is vain to attempt to throw exclusive opprobrium upon the last agents in the transaction.”

The war ended in an easy British victory and the famous Treaty of 1842. The treaty ended China's isolation and drew it into the orbit of Europe; also, as was later to be seen, it ended China's sovereignty for almost a century. Specifically, it ceded the island of Hongkong to Great Britain, opened five ports to foreign trade, levied an indemnity to cover the expenses of the war and the value of the opium destroyed, and laid the foundation of the right of foreigners to determine the rate of China's tariff and to live in China immune from China's legal jurisdiction, the right known as extra-territoriality. The United States and France followed immediately with successful demands for similar privileges, guaranteed in treaties. It was the United States that first wrote into a treaty with China the most-favored-nation clause, whereby any right granted to one nation is auto-

⁵ Op. cit., Vol. I, p. 195.

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matically granted to every other nation benefiting by such a clause.

What follows is an oft-told tale⁶ and need not be rehearsed here except in outline. It is, also, not a very uplifting one. China was beaten into abject submission and then, helpless, subjected to unrestrained, unabashed raiding. It was frank, lusty plundering—a competitive grasping for spoils which helped array the despoilers in opposing camps which came to catastrophe in 1914. At first there were formal wars and then, when China's weakness was exposed, aggressions, outright seizures of territory, subtle penetrations and appropriations of political privileges and economic perquisites by a campaign waged with the varied armory of diplomacy allied with high finance and resting on dreadnoughts.

After a small incident in 1856 there was another war, France this time joining with England. China was defeated and forced to accept a treaty opening more ports to trade, ceding a strip of territory to England opposite Hong-kong on the southern mainland, permitting foreigners to travel in the interior and missionaries to proselyte for Christianity without restriction, and also, with an unconscious touch of irony, legalizing the importation of opium. It was in this treaty also that the residence of foreign envoys in Peking was provided for. When China sought to evade ratification of the treaty, the Anglo-French forces marched overland from the port of Tientsin to

⁶ The standard work of reference in English is Morse, H. B., *The International Relations of the Chinese Empire*. It leans somewhat toward the foreign point of view.

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Peking and looted and destroyed one of its most famous palaces together with its priceless art objects.

A few years later Russia wrested acknowledgment of its sovereignty over the territory in Eastern Siberia north of the Amur River, including what is now Vladivostok. By stages in the course of the next twenty years France seized Cochin China, Annam and Tongking in the South, forming what is now its empire in Indo-China, while Great Britain appropriated Burma. In 1894 Japan, which was bent on winning international recognition of equality and properly saw that it could do so only by demonstrating that it had a military machine capable of aggression, forced a war on China. It won and took Formosa and the first step toward acquisition of Korea, which it formally annexed in 1911. It also claimed the Liaotung Peninsula on the Manchurian coast but had to forego the claim because of threats by Russia, with the support of Germany and France. And thus was foredoomed the Russo-Japanese war in 1904.

In return for its services in forcing Japan to disgorge, Russia demanded and got the right to build the Chinese Eastern Railway across North Manchuria as a link in the Trans-Siberian Railway. Later this was extended across South Manchuria to the Liaotung Peninsula, together with mining concessions and the right to maintain military guards in the railway zone. Then began the famous scramble for concessions. In compensation for the murder of two missionaries Germany exacted a 99-year lease on the shore of Kiaochow Bay, where it proceeded to build the city of Tsingtao, a naval base and a railway running

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into the heart of Shantung Province. By the operation of the principle of balance of power Russia then obtained a lease on the Liaotung Peninsula, including what is now Port Arthur and Dairen; Britain obtained a similar lease on Weihaiwei, also in the north, and France on Kwangchaowan in the south.

Simultaneously there was the scramble for railway concessions. Russia having got a franchise for a railway in Manchuria, France and Belgium got one for a trunk line in one direction and England and Germany for one in another. Attached to all the franchises were loan agreements mortgaging the lines to foreign lenders, usually giving control of management and also pledging public revenues as security. For loan politics had begun, and foreign influence was beginning to strike deeper into China's vitals with the sharp edge of banks than ever it could with forces of occupation. At the end of the century the spheres of influence were openly proclaimed. Russia ear-marked for itself the territory north of the Great Wall, Germany that which was adjacent to Shantung Province, Great Britain the Yangtze Valley or middle region and France the southwestern provinces. In the area of each sphere the nation claiming the sphere had the exclusive privilege of such development of resources as was to be undertaken with foreign capital, which meant, of course, whatever development there was to be. Further, the collection of the Chinese customs revenue was in the hands of the foreigners under British supervision and the Post Office under French supervision. China's tariff itself was determined by the foreign Powers. Not

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one schedule could be changed without their unanimous consent. The result, of course, was that the tariff was kept as low as possible in their interests. Finally, in every key port there were areas set aside for foreign residence, either as concessions or settlements, which were in effect governed by foreigners as foreign soil. They were really foreign colonies which dominated the whole economic life of their respective regions.

There appeared to be left only the formal act of partition when China made one last gesture of revolt. This was the Boxer uprising in 1900, when the foreign legations in Peking were besieged, missionaries and other foreigners attacked in other parts of the country and many killed. It was an act of fanatic despair and unfortunate in that the innocent were victimized; but the motives are understandable. At any rate China was penalized for its defiance soon enough. An international expedition marched from Tientsin to Peking, sacked the capital with a degree of cruelty to natives which has since become infamous and then imposed an indemnity of \$330,000,000—a sum far, far in excess of the actual damage done by the Boxers. For the thousands of Chinese peasants and town workers slaughtered by the foreign troops and the Chinese property looted no reciprocal compensation was discussed. But a permanent foreign military garrison was established in Peking, almost adjoining the imperial palace. It is there yet.

At this point, when partition seemed really imminent, the United States intervened and obtained the agreement of the Powers to the historic Open Door declarations

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pledging respect for China's integrity and application of the principle of equality of opportunity for all Powers in China. The observation of these declarations has been somewhat pickwickian. For while China has been juridically sovereign, while it has had a government and the forms of independence, in everything that matters it has been a subject people, its destiny determined by others in their own interests. If China survived at all as an entity, it was only because the Powers which sought the break-up of China could not agree on a division of the spoils and knew that any attempt at single-handed expropriation would have precipitated a general war. The dog-in-the-manger policy which has governed Occidental activity in the East from the very beginning was China's salvation. Even so, it is problematical whether China could have long escaped extinction as a state except for two events. First was the Russo-Japanese war, after which Japan emerged as successor to Russia's conquests in China and as a factor which would have to be reckoned in any Occidental hopes for aggrandizement in the Far East. Before adjustment had been made for that factor the second event arrived, and pause was given to all conquests everywhere by the world war. China has not been altogether unfortunate.

CHAPTER IV

THE FOUNDATIONS UNDERMINED

LIANG CH'I-CH'IAO, one of the distinguished scholars of the last generation, once wrote in an essay:

"We carve wood or mold clay into the image of a person and call it a god. Place it in a beautiful temple, and seat it in a glorious shrine and the people will worship it and find it mysteriously potent. But suppose some insane person should pull it down, tread it under foot and throw it into a dirty pond and suppose someone should discover it and carry it back to its original sacred abode, you will find the charm has gone from it."

At bottom this is what has happened to China and this is why there is what we call chaos, why the day's newspapers bring reports of new civil wars, new governments, new mutinies, organized bandit scourges, private seizures of public revenues—in short, the negation of order. A symbol has been cast down and exposed and has lost its potency. And the hand that hurled it from its pedestal, even if without deliberate intent, was the hand of the conquering white man.

There was no government in China in our sense, as I have said. But there was a source of authority, an ultimate repository of power. There was a principle of order and a symbol of the collective might of the nation which

could not be challenged. This was the dynasty and its hierarchy of officials. It wielded the mandate of heaven and therefore commanded respect; conversely, only as long as it commanded respect could it wield the mandate. The people could govern themselves with respect to their own affairs, but that which affected the welfare of the state, of the whole, was the province of the monarchy. While the system could and did run on momentum, that which gave the momentum directive force and even pace was the monarchy. At least there was no violent deflection from a regular course. In a larger sense normality was preserved. Whenever the government—the reigning house and its officials—lost this power and the prestige which it gave, there was disruption, a period of confusion and usually the passing of the dynasty and the succession of another which could regain the power and the respect that went with it and therefore restore order. The government had one function besides that of mystic symbol of unity; it was the element of stabilization.

The nineteenth century, as it happened, was fated to be a period of confusion in any case. Had no external influence intruded itself at all, had China remained literally in isolation, a difficult time of adjustment lay ahead nevertheless. The Manchu dynasty was losing its vitality. Its control was weakening. The Manchus' reign over China was at best artificial. It grew out of a more or less episodic military conquest at a time when the Ming dynasty had become enervated and lost hold. The Manchus themselves were a small people, nomadic, virile but relatively primitive; certainly they were unfitted to direct

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a static, complex society. They could conquer and take possession, and then they could station their garrisons at strategic points throughout the country; but if they maintained themselves as long as they did it was not by virtue of the garrisons but, as has been said before, because they had produced two figures of heroic dimensions—the Emperors K'ang Hsi and Ch'ien Lung, who with an interval of fourteen years reigned from 1662 to 1796. They were great administrators, men of extraordinary wisdom and grasp, of high intellectual caliber and lofty character; they made themselves exponents of what is best in Chinese culture and sought to hold the country up to what is best in its history and spirit. Their reign was truly magnificent, but it was they who ruled, not the Manchus. That may, indeed, have been their principal failing. The Manchu people were confined to official life or garrison duty. They were quartered on the Chinese as parasites, their maintenance assured. Those who went through the Chinese educational machinery to qualify themselves for civil appointment managed to keep their edge, the others became sluggish. As time has proved since the Manchu dynasty was overthrown in 1911 and individual Manchus were put on their own resources to sustain themselves, nearly all of them had become unfitted for the struggle for existence, and those who have survived are now at the dregs—hewers of wood and drawers of water, mordant examples of the price of conquest in China.

With the death of Ch'ien Lung the grip of the Manchus began to loosen. Between him and his successor Chia Ch'ing there was an enormous gap in character and capac-

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ity, and the decline continued to the end. Court intrigue, concubine meddling and eunuch politics entered, the un-failing signal of decay. Corruption increased. Official discipline relaxed. The administration became loose. Parenthetically, the influence of opium was particularly demoralizing among the official classes. Exploitation and oppression by officialdom became more callous. Manchu control was slipping. Secret societies were raising their heads again, another signal of impending danger. As one reviews the history of the time it becomes clear that China was entering on the downward swing of the curve and that only the supervision of some extraordinary person or combination of circumstances could have impeded the descent. What supervened instead was an alien thrust which only accelerated it.

The white man came. He intruded a foreign body into the Chinese system which the system could not assimilate, the more so since its resistance was then low, with the result that its normal processes were thrown out of order. Even the manner of its breakdown was complicated beyond all precedent, so that it never really understood its ailment, was helpless in finding a remedy and could not have a natural convalescence. In fact, there has been no convalescence and what China has been undergoing these last few years is the death throes of the system.

First, the foreigner shattered the prestige of the government. He exposed its weakness and therefore helped break down its authority. He showed the idol to be only molded clay. It is not wholly accident that the first serious revolt against the Manchu dynasty—what really

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was the beginning of the revolution that is not yet over—began at the point where Europe made its first inroads. This was the Taiping rebellion, which started in the country adjacent to Canton only nine years after the British had humbled China and dictated the treaty of 1842. Its leader, Hung Hsiu-ch'uan, a mentally diseased fanatic, was born near Canton, saw something of the foreigners there and more or less accidentally acquired a smattering of Christian doctrine through tracts and a short acquaintance with an American missionary. He acquired enough to give him delusions of divinity and impel him to proclaim himself younger brother of Jesus and found a new religion. He also acquired napoleonic delusions and gathered soldiers as well as converts to support him in his mission to save the country.

Before the rebellion was suppressed in 1865, fourteen years after it had begun, eleven provinces had been overrun, an enormous region ravaged and millions slaughtered. At one time Peking seemed likely to fall and it is problematical whether the rebellion would not have succeeded had it not been for the help given the imperial forces by foreign troops, led at the end by the British officer later known as Chinese Gordon. It is also problematical whether the success of the rebellion would not have been for the best, in the light of what has since happened. China's period of travail might have been shortened. It would have plunged at once into the depths but perhaps would have made the transition from dynasty to dynasty fairly easily and come up reinvigorated instead of slowly sinking and remaining bogged as it has. Nor

could it have been in any worse position to meet the foreign onslaught that was to come, both by way of military attack and influence of new ideas.

There is no reason to assert that a fanatic, imbued with a few half-baked notions of Christianity and endowed with a magnetic personality, could not have rallied to himself an army and swept away opposition even if the British had not won at Canton. But it is clear that the defeat did impress the native population tremendously. A member of the staff of the first British consulate to open in Canton and an eye-witness, writing a few years later, comments on the fact that in two or three years those who before had seemed to the native population to be merely uncouth beings of another and inferior sphere and had only attracted attention by their opposition to the government's anti-opium measures suddenly "acquired a totally new character as a people possessing not only wonderful fireships and other irresistible engines of war, but, if no other description of settled government, at least a regular military organization which enabled them to inflict a signal defeat on the hitherto invincible Manchus and to dictate to the imperial government an ignominious peace."¹ In 1847, the same writer adds, the attention of the whole province was aroused by the occupation of Canton by British forces to compel fulfillment of one of the provisions of the treaty of 1842 which the Chinese sought to escape. The rural population of the vicinity formed volunteer bands to help repel the invasion but no resistance was offered by the government troops. "This

¹ Meadows, T. T., *The Chinese and Their Rebellions*, p. 80.

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drew general attention as well to the plans of the foreigners as to the general inability of the Manchu government to resist the people entertaining such plans.”²

For years after the signing of the treaty of 1842 there was serious friction in and around Canton. China had submitted juridically but not at heart, and diplomatic technicalities had no meaning to the masses. The government sought to evade obligations accepted under duress and the population resented the presence of an alien interloper, while the British on their part quite understandably wanted the fruits of their victory. Here were all the makings of a situation which could breed only incidents, some serious, as the one just cited, and some just minor clashes and street brawls. But serious or trivial, they had but one conclusion: the government was humbled. Consistently through the years the Son of Heaven and his court were shown to be impotent. It was a lesson that the illiterate peasant could read. More important, it was one that the educated classes could interpret in its full significance. The government was no longer able to meet the first requirement of protecting the country from invasion.

It was thus also in the north not much later. When the English and French in 1860 marched overland to the capital, occupied it and destroyed the Yuan Ming Yuan palace, they demonstrated to those whom the magnificence of the court overawed by its visible presence that it was an imposing façade and nothing more. In Shanghai the foreigners were building themselves an impressive city and governing it indifferent to the constituted authorities.

² Ibid., p. 87.

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Year by year the foreigner was taking on more formidable proportions, standing out more successfully defiant, and more conclusively demonstrating that the Chinese government could be defied. The climax, striking the Chinese with paralyzing force, was the war with Japan, which ended in 1894 with a defeat which was not only catastrophic but bitterly humiliating, coming as it did from the Japanese, whom the Chinese had traditionally patronized as a negligible people on a few small islands, a people to whom they had given civilization and from whom they had exacted tribute in return. To be humbled by the European could be construed as the working of inscrutable fate, so patently did the warships and the cannon and all other irresistible accouterments of military prowess prove the white man to be a superman against whose might it was hopeless to struggle. But the Japanese was known; he was of the known world, of the same world, and to have to submit to him, too, was galling confession of the lowly estate to which China had fallen. There followed, then, rapidly the series of alienations of territory in the war of the concessions and then the Boxer uprising and its terrible punishment, when the court fled in panic and then returned to sign death warrants as directed and send some of its highest members on world tours of apology.

Sun Yat-sen, to whom may be credited beyond any other individual the overthrow not only of the Manchu dynasty but of the historic political system, specifically lays the firing of his own impulse for revolution to the successive humiliations by the foreigners. "From 1885, *i.e.*, from the time of our defeat in the war with France,"

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he writes in his memoirs,³ "I set before myself the object of the overthrow of the Tai-Tsing (Manchu) dynasty and the establishment of a Chinese Republic on its ruins." Again, dealing with a later period, he writes: "This was just at the time when the Imperial armies were suffering one defeat after another. After the loss of Korea, the Monarchy lost the glamour of its power, as before all the Chinese there were clearly revealed the decay and rottenness of the Manchu dynasty."⁴ In explaining the sudden change of attitude on the part of many Chinese from antipathy toward the revolutionary plotters to benevolent neutrality or open sympathy, he says:⁵ "The glamour of the power of the Tai-Tsing dynasty was finally dispersed when the troops of the eight Powers entered as conquerors into Peking, while the representatives of the Imperial House fled, and after an armistice agreed to an indemnity for damages of 100 millions (sic). The material conditions of the Chinese people grew worse and worse, and a terrible peril continued to hang over the Motherland. All intelligent Chinese began to understand that China was on the brink of destruction. From this moment a new revolutionary wave began to grow up."

Not only by formal attacks was the foundation of government authority undermined and its weakness exposed. There was another element of attrition. This was the missionary. It will be necessary later to touch on the broader results of missionary penetration in China. Here only the first immediate effects on the stability of the political

³ Sun Yat-sen, *Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary*, p. 185.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 187.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 199.

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structure will be discussed. By the treaty of 1860 missionaries were empowered to reside in any part of China for the propagation of Christianity and to rent land and construct houses, privileges not given to other foreigners. Thus protected, missionaries began to multiply rapidly. Through the first half of the century they had chafed at the restrictions which impeded their bearing light to the darkness in the hinterland and saving the heathen from doom—the early missionary was not given to doubts, nor were his supporters back home. With the guarantee of extra-territoriality, they were of course immune from any interference or control by the Chinese authorities. At first their immunity was modified by a certain physical risk, because the native population was likely to be hostile. But as time went on and the foreign Powers had demonstrated that any injury done to foreigners, no matter where the fault lay, would have to be repaid by the most egregious indemnities—the murder of two German missionaries in 1898 cost China part of a province, it will be remembered—the government began to visit punishments on local officials in districts in which missionaries came to harm. Further, when missionaries had disputes with local authorities they made their complaints to consular and diplomatic representatives, who took them up with the higher Chinese officials on the principle, the foreigner can do no wrong. There was therefore added reason for adhering to the rule that a good official was one of whom the one higher up heard nothing. When, therefore, the highest had to adjust a dispute arising in some district and suffer the humiliation which bending to a foreign

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diplomat's threats entailed, displeasure was certain to be visited on the local magistrate. In consequence, the magistrate took pains to make sure that there would be no disputes. The missionary was always right. No matter what the circumstances, he had his way.

A vicious system was thus set up, intensified as time went on by broad interpretations read into the guarantee of the right to preach and practice the Christian faith without hindrance. This soon became construed to include the Chinese converts. What resulted is self-evident. The conversion of a peasant in an inland village, where a white man had never even been seen before, inevitably led to difficulties—difficulties with his family and with fellow-villagers. Not only was he deemed treacherous for trafficking with the alien but his refusal as a Christian to share in the sanctified rituals of the family and community was regarded as blasphemous. His relatives and fellow-villagers would have been more than human if they had not sought to punish him. He was ostracized or boycotted or openly attacked. In either case his missionary patrons took it upon themselves to protect him. Moreover, they exacted the protection of the magistrate for him and because of the magistrate's fear of complications higher up he gave it. Thus the process gradually took on the color of a preferential position for Chinese converts. They, too, acquired an immunity from Chinese authority. This was less extensively and less profitably capitalized by Protestant missionaries than by Catholics, but by both enough to drive a poisoned wedge into the heart of Chinese relationships. And thus also the impotence of the

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Chinese government was glaringly advertised not only to the politically conscious in the larger centers but to the masses throughout the land. It was no incentive for obedience to constituted authority and no encouragement to the maintenance of law and order.

Against this danger the Chinese were no less helpless than against the positive and more direct attack of formal armaments. Tyler Dennett, who has made the most exhaustive study of America's part in the opening of China and who is disposed to be friendly to missionary efforts, makes the following summary of their influence in the period when China was being forced to its knees: ⁶

"It seems reasonable to believe that at any time in the century, at least after 1870, the Chinese government would have removed all missionaries from the interior had it been free to do so. The Protestant missionaries were objectionable to the local authorities, to the gentry, and to large masses of the ignorant populace because their converts rejected ancestor worship, refused to join in the expenses of idol processions and temple repairs, and because of their gently disturbing influence on the indolent and corrupt practices of the local authorities. The Catholic missionaries were still more objectionable because they claimed official rank in the hierarchy of Chinese officials, because they interfered where their converts were concerned with the operations of the courts and police, and because, through the French government, they assumed a protectorate over the Chinese converts. They were an *imperium in imperio*."

⁶ Dennett, Tyler, *Americans in Eastern Asia*, pp. 573-4.

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Another writer, temperamentally perhaps more hostile to the missionary cause, accents the point more sharply:⁷

“Missionaries were permitted to enter and settle in the interior, where everything was strange, for practical purposes beyond the orbit of their countries’ laws, while protected against the jurisdiction of the government under which they were to live. Men who could withstand the temptation offered by such a state of things are not born every day. Without rule of conduct save their individual judgment, with no previous understanding with the Chinese provincial officials as to their relative rights and duties, they were left to find such accommodation to their surroundings as their several idiosyncrasies and the untried conditions of Chinese life might determine. The missionary in the interior had thus all the qualities of a ‘foreign body’ setting up irritation in the organism—a state of things, however, which his absolute faith in the sanctity of his mission perhaps prevented him from comprehending.”

Again from the same writer with regard to China’s early antagonism toward organized Christian proselyting:⁸

“What is it in the propagation of Christianity that excites the hostility of people and rulers? It is that the missionaries present themselves to Chinese view as the instruments of powerful nations bent on the ruin of the empire. They enter the country with the talisman of extra-territoriality; their persons are sacred; the law of the

⁷ Michie, Alexander, *The Englishman in China*, Vol. II, p. 228.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 233-234.

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land cannot lay hands on them. That is the first stage. The second is that they seek to extra-territorialize their converts also, whose battles they fight in the provincial courts and in the rustic communes, and so make it of material advantage to the people to bear the banner of the Cross. Many missionaries are really zealous in the work of alienating the Chinese from their natural allegiance and of encouraging them to seek the protection of foreign Powers as against the native authorities. Thus a revolution of the most vital nature is in progress, and is being pushed on with all the energy which Christian combined with ecclesiastical and political zeal can throw into the work. Village is set against village, clan against clan, family against family, and a man's foes in China are too often they of his own household.

"So formidable, indeed, have the missionaries become that most of the provincial authorities are afraid as well as jealous of them; and peace-loving viceroys give the simple injunction to their prefects and magistrates that on no account must they permit dispute with foreigners or native Christians. This means that the Chinese Christians must be upheld right or wrong, and the Christian would be very un-Chinese if he did not take advantage of such a privilege to trounce his heathen neighbors."

In conclusion, there were at work in the Chinese state forces of disruption. Under no circumstances could the country have escaped disorders in the larger sense. But the Occident gave weight and drive to the forces of disruption, while at the same time paralyzing resistance. Revolution in the social order would have come in any

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case; but it is possible that had China been spared military and political assault on its political structure, too, the strains of social disturbance might have been taken up more easily. The contemporary chaos which appears on the day-to-day record to be the making only of over-ambitious, greedy and up-start military adventurers has in it also much for which we are responsible.

CHAPTER V

CHINA FACES ITS FATE

WHY, it is conventionally asked, why did not China do as Japan did? Why has China failed where Japan, so much smaller and more vulnerable, has succeeded? Japan, after it had been forced open by the United States in 1853, recognized the import of the coming of the West and quickly set about the business of preparing itself to meet the menace. Once the decision was made it flung itself wholeheartedly into the work of reconstruction and modernization. A systematic effort was begun to bring the economic and social structure of the country into line with the world which had suddenly impinged on Japan and in which Japan would have to struggle to survive. Missions of study and investigation were sent to Europe and America, railways planned, telegraph lines and other means of communication installed and an efficient army and navy organized, on a scale which would enable them in time to defend the country under the conditions of modern warfare. Japan saved itself, regained its sovereignty after a period in which it, too, had to bend, and is now a first-class Power, sitting as an equal at the council tables of the mighty at Geneva or London or Paris or The Hague or wherever the mighty happen to be shaping the destiny of nations. And China with its four hundred million people, its vastly greater natural

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wealth and its memories of overawing all it looked on, still flounders, tragically caught in its own helplessness and ever weaving new nets for its own entanglement. Why? Why did not China, too, find proper channels for its power, if not in time to save itself then at least to make an early recovery?

First of all, China did not recognize the import of what was pounding at its gates. It did not realize that what demanded admission was a world which had left China far behind in material achievement, at least, and which moreover could not and would not be denied, since it was propelled by an inner dynamic drive which it itself could not resist. China did not realize that there was anything to save itself from, any need to save itself at all. At first it underestimated the strength of the West and then failed to perceive that this strength lay in more than armaments. Not until the latter part of the nineteenth century was there any understanding that what was involved was a difference in civilization and that the difference was not wholly in China's favor. China's attitude was the obverse of the attitude from which all Western action in the East has sprung—the attitude which for that matter still governs our action everywhere in the East or wherever else the absence of the use of machinery results in habits different from those which we have acquired since we have mastered the use of power machinery. We, too, have been and still are blankly ignorant or blandly indifferent to the fact that basic cultural differences cause basic differences of expression in institutions, politically, economically, socially. We are not yet wholly aware that

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this is inevitable and not a matter of perversity or unregeneracy or what we call unfitness. Nor are we wholly aware that difference is not necessarily and inherently synonymous with inferiority.

The Chinese were not aware either, which is to say that they were subject to our limitations—to human limitations. But there is more excuse for them than for us. We have had knowledge and the means of acquiring it. We have had possibilities of range of vision from which to see with perspective. They had not. Mountain, desert and sea shut them in; meager facilities of communication locked them in. As has already been said, their neighbors had always been their disciples, pupils and imitators; they had had no experience of superiors or even of equals. They had been mentors, and humility had been bred out of them by lack of use. If racial arrogance and self-complacency are ever forgivable—and if not, then all races stand condemned—then they were forgivable in the Chinese. Certainly in the Chinese they were understandable, which may come to the same thing: for in achievements of organization on the material plane which can be called civilization no less than in creative expression on the abstract levels of culture they were a superior race. Their fallacy lay in the assumption that none could ever claim equality, a fallacy common to all races.

The attitude of the Chinese is understandable also on more tangible grounds. It has already been pointed out that the white race did not come to the East bearing visible tokens of superiority. The white men who came first had nearly all the qualities of vandals and barbarians. The

exceptions, like the earliest Jesuits, could not cancel out the impressions left by the many; they were too palpably exceptional. Later when there was reason to take more serious thought of what the Europeans signified they came in the guise of traffickers in opium. Again it must be emphasized that what the white man meant to the Chinese until after the middle of the nineteenth century was opium. It was unfortunate that the representation the white man gave of himself was so incomplete and so misleading, but the fault lay not with China. The deductions drawn by China may have been erroneous but they were also logical. If it did not read the world situation aright in 1800 or even 1850, as the Japanese did, it was also because the signs were deceptive. But there are also grounds for which China was itself to blame. Its ruling class was obscurantic and blind; it was ostrich-like to the end. The Manchu aristocracy was incompetent to direct domestic affairs, let alone unprecedented foreign relations. Had there been in China a group of men of the stature of those who emerged in Japan between 1865 and 1890 China's lot would at least have been alleviated.

There were fundamental reasons, however, why China's lot could at best have been only alleviated and not escaped. With all possible foresight China could not have done as Japan did. Japan consisted of a few small islands, China was a continent. In more than one of China's provinces there was as large a population as in all of Japan. All of Japan's population was and is within practicable reach of a strong ruler or oligarchical group. Notwithstanding the stereotyped prescription of foreign

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diplomats and businessmen in the semi-European concession ports, no "strong man" can impose his will on China. No strong man will impose unity on China now or lead it out of its political chaos or social confusion. It is painfully conventional to babble about a Chinese Mussolini. China has one. It has half a dozen. That is its trouble. A Chinese Mussolini would have to be all that Mussolini is in Italy, but he would also have to be Mussolini for Italy and France and Germany and Hungary and Poland and Esthonia as well. And this the most passionate American admirer does not believe the Italian Mussolini could be. What the Italian Mussolini is, more than one Chinese has fairly well succeeded in being in one or two provinces in the last few years. At the risk of monotony it must be repeated that China is a continent, and that it must be compared, not with one country in Europe but with the continent of Europe. Japan, however, was a country, and a small one; the decision of a group of leaders could be enforced.

Furthermore, the Japanese were a people whose habits had been formed in a past of simple feudal loyalties. Obedience was bred in their consciousness. It still is characteristic of them to a degree unique in the East. They are a people whose will can be "delivered" en masse. The Chinese are a people whose will very emphatically can not be delivered. There is no race more difficult to regiment. It is too particularistic in its loyalties and allegiances. Partly the size of the country is the cause, partly climatic and geographical differences, partly linguistic differences, partly the difference in customs resulting from sectional-

ism, which in turn is the result of lack of communications. Mainly the cause resides in the family system. Taking the family system as the social unit, the Chinese may be called highly individualistic. Until industrialism brings about standardization of goods and of use, and therefore of habit and ultimately, no doubt, of thought or at least belief, the Chinese will remain individualistic. Had China's official and unofficial leaders in 1840 seen with clairvoyant clarity the necessity of compromising with Europe both politically and culturally and of adopting or at least adapting Europeanization in order to withstand Europe, and had they commanded that it be done, it would not and could not have been done. In the nature of things it could not. In Japan it could and it was.

One more consideration must be urged. It is that Japan had the good fortune to be relatively inconsequential. It was a trifling prize to give much thought and enterprise to when the great stake of China lay hard by. For there was half of Asia, not an island; half of Asia and, as was then believed, the wealth of El Dorado. To possess it was to grasp the key to the world. And had England or Russia or Germany or France or all of them been able to secure real, effective and conclusive domination of China they could have taken Japan in their stride. With all the underlying ground of Eastern Asia in their control the plum of Japan would have fallen to them automatically. And it was just as Japan was getting well started on its reconstruction that the positive raid on China was gathering force. Japan had time to gather to its feet and breathe

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easily when it most needed a respite. It, too, was pounded, but only by the way.

China, then, was left unstirred and unstimulating. It buried its head in the sand. Not until 1870, at the earliest, was there the dawning of a conception of a world from which there was much to be learned and much that had to be learned. Even then there was no real idea of the possibility, even the necessity, of what can be called in a word modernization. The implications of what lay behind the striking power of the West were not glimpsed. The bitterness which China had to eat impelled it to take refuge in contempt. The white man could smite with vigor, but that was all the more proof that he was a barbarian. If there was any desire to take anything from the West, it was only the West's capacity to fight, so that China might be able to defend itself. But there was no understanding that this capacity was yielded by a system of production and social organization, a technology and a mastery of science and mechanical instruments; that a powerful military establishment was only one of the corollaries of a different and more complex social order. What China wanted, in other words, was warships and goods; it did not know that these demanded, first of all, an industrialism and all that goes with industrialism.

In the nature of things, the existence along the coast of foreign enclaves in the form of the concession towns released influences which penetrated. These were foreign cities and they pressed a trade in foreign goods, the use of which slowly dug new grooves of conduct. As Chinese began to flow into the foreign towns they had to make

at least partial adaptation to foreign ways. And there developed a class of Chinese who did business with foreigners, flourished and liked it. They, too, were not of a kind to commend what the foreigner stood for. They had all the qualities of a parvenu class everywhere. In the words of Ku Hung-ming, an erratic but often penetrating protagonist of the old order, they were "men of the rich lower middle and compradore classes who had made money by foreign trade; and these men all showed an inclination to favor what they called progress in the direction of adopting foreign ways and methods. Their crude ideas of adopting foreign ways and methods, however, had all the vulgarity and hideousness which Matthew Arnold speaks of in the English middleclass liberalism."¹ This vulgarity shocked the perhaps overprecious literati of the intellectual aristocracy no less than the obscurantist officialdom; and not knowing that what they were seeing was only the worst side of foreign ways—and the worst side translated through the medium of an up-start Chinese class—they, too, naturally became anti-foreign. They, too, turned against any form of cultural compromise.

A few slight breaches were made in the wall of conservatism in the seventies. An educational mission was sent abroad and a group of thirty boys were taken to the United States to acquire a Western education, but there was a subsequent reaction and they were recalled. A short railway was laid from Shanghai to Woosung, a village on the Yangtze River a few miles away, but not only were the peasants outraged by the violence thus done to the

¹ Ku Hung-ming, *Story of a Chinese Oxford Movement*, p. 19.

spirits of wind and water which determine their happiness and prosperity, but the literati saw it as an entering wedge. So great was the opposition that the rails were torn up. These were surface indications of stirrings underneath. The mass was beginning to lose its rigidity. The influences radiating from the port cities were penetrating. That which gives industrialism its first appeal and which is after all its one clear indisputable advantage, namely, the greater production of wealth, was exercising its lure in China. Against that appeal no esthetic distastes or philosophical abstractions can offer effective resistance. The Chinese began to respond to it long before they were consciously yielding their conviction of the superiority of their own way of life.

The territorial encroachments in the eighties had tremendous repercussions. For one thing, it was clear to all elements that China had to acquire means of defense. Thus, the lure of wealth found rational, even respectable support. There began to emerge a small group of influential men who openly opposed the policy of obscurantism. Notable among them and the one who did most to change the current was Chang Chih-tung, viceroy of the two provinces of Hupeh and Hunan. He began by advocating and then instituting modern industrial works and later openly urged the adoption of Western education. Another was Li Hung-chang, who was interested only in material developments and confined himself to encouraging the establishment of a modern army and navy and taking the lead in forming industrial enterprises of all kinds—in which he himself was heavily interested. By

the beginning of the last decade an impetus had been gathered. There were even some concrete results—a telegraph line between Shanghai and Tientsin, a steamship line, a small railway, an iron works, an arsenal, two cotton mills and the like.

It was by the defeat by Japan in 1894, however, that China was devastatingly shaken. The exposure of China's helplessness, no less than the blow to its pride, released a panic. Japan's success, not only against China but in winning the respect of the world and forcing the Powers to relinquish their derogations on its sovereignty, pointed the wisdom of the course it had followed, in contrast to China's obduracy. The conservatives were swept away by an enthusiasm in which there was part desperation and part wishful fancy for a magic key. To quote Ku Hung-ming again: "The Chinese literati before the Japanese war wondered at, hated and abhorred this terrific monster (the materialistic civilization of Europe) but they still despised it and in a way tried to ignore the possibility of this monster doing much harm to the Chinese people and their civilization. The monster was far away in Europe, in another continent; the danger therefore was remote. But now after the Japanese war the only thing which intervened between China and her civilization and this terrific monster . . . was a little strip of water, the China Sea; thereupon an exceedingly great fear fell upon the literati of China."²

The result was a wild rush for modernization, not unlike that which has taken place in the last few years. The

² Op. cit., p. 32.

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Chinese, a conspicuously conservative people, are, paradoxically, also given to wild rushes—perhaps just because they are conservative and partly, also, because for a generation they have been moved by a psychology of despair. They forgot, however, that Japan had not accomplished its transition in a rush, and that almost a generation had elapsed since it had begun making itself over. Parenthetically, Japan has not actually completed its transition even now: it has succeeded only in rearing a magnificent and perhaps deceptive façade; a stupendous achievement, of course, but also the cause of the many contemporary maladjustments between its social parts. Not only the disastrous earthquake is responsible for Japan's fundamental instability in recent years. The conflicting strains of old and new are still to be composed. Nevertheless, when the Chinese set out to follow in Japan's wake Japan had already been a generation on the way, and had laid some deposits on which it could stand solidly. China sought to throw up a new world overnight. There was a fever of planning, without much forethought, without even much knowledge of what was involved. There were not a hundred men in the country who had a genuine understanding of the West or of the motive force of its institutions or the source of its power or the genius of its civilization. There was only a febrile, inchoate desire, goaded by discontent.

The climax came with the drama of 1898. Nine years earlier the Emperor Kwang Hsu, for whom the Empress Dowager Tzu Hsi had been acting as regent, ascended the throne in his own right. He was a weak and ineffectual

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person, of whom little had been heard in the first few years of his incumbency and little more expected. Then for some reason he came under the influence of a group of Chinese scholars and officials of the reform party, led by K'ang Yu-wei and Liang Ch'i-ch'iao, the former being among the most distinguished of the literati. Night after night there were secret audiences in the Forbidden City, and the pliant young Emperor was indoctrinated with revolutionary ideas. He was meet for persuasion, since the Powers were just beginning the process of truncation which seemed the prelude to the final break-up of China. From January to September, 1898, there followed a dizzying succession of Imperial Mandates overturning an established order and setting up a new one by fiat—a procedure and an attitude of mind which unhappily have become chronic by now.

It is significant that almost the first mandate refers to the "crisis where we are beset on all sides by powerful neighbors who craftily seek advantage from us and who are trying to combine together in overpowering us," and the consequent need of reorganizing the nation's defenses. Again and again this note recurs in the mandates; the menace of the foreign Powers was still uppermost in the minds of those who feared for China's future. Still it was that rather than any desire for social reconstruction for its own sake; and to the menace of the foreigner may be laid in large part the hysteria which doomed the effort for reform to an abortive end, the bigoted reaction which followed, the frustration of orderly evolution which fol-

lowed from that and the foreclosure of any alternative but actual revolution.

While it was pathetic in its naïveté there was also high drama in a bigoted, reactionary court one day abolishing the traditional organization of the army and prescribing new armaments and a new organization, the next day ordering the establishment of universities and a school system throughout the country, another day decreeing the translation at once of all books on Western learning, commanding the immediate building of railroads, opening of mines, publication of newspapers, organization of a new judicial system, scientific methods in agriculture through a whole system of agricultural schools to be inaugurated forthwith—and in every mandate haste, haste, haste. What is emphasized most, next to military defense, and what most infuriated the reactionary officialdom was the repetitive emphasis on education. The historic examinations for choosing officials by testing their knowledge of the Confucian canons were abolished; in essence the old education was discarded. . . . “A simple knowledge of the classics is not enough to fit men nowadays for important posts in the Imperial government. What is most important now is for men to have a knowledge of the world and of things going on outside of China.” . . . “We must also so select such subjects of Western knowledge as will keep us in touch with the times and diligently study them and practice them in order to place our country abreast with other countries.” . . . “Let us all try to reject empty and useless knowledge, which has no practical value in the crisis we are passing through.” . . .

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"Keep posted on present day events taking place throughout the universe." . . . "What we really aim at now is to give a practical education for our scholars." . . . ("practical" education, unmodulated utilitarianism, supplanting the most rigid classicism any culture has ever known) . . . "At the present time when the country is struggling with burdens and difficulties we have come to the conclusion that if we wish to make ourselves strong once more, there is no other way than to cast away from us the old régime and inaugurate a modern one." It was subversive of all the sanctities and it goaded to fury all those who held by the sanctities, notably the court cliques and above all the Manchu aristocracy, which was by now more conservative of all that had been immemorially Chinese than the Chinese themselves—not so much because of conscious belief as because of somnolence and decadence.

The capital seethed, paled before what was imminent, intrigued, and then struck, as much in the end to save political and dynastic placemen as to preserve the ancient institutions. There was a *coup d'état*. The leaders of the reform party who did not make their escape abroad were executed. In a mandate nominally decreed by himself the Emperor plaintively recanted, blaming himself for being misled by treasonable schemers and asserting that he had not meant what his mandates said. Finally the Empress Dowager seized the throne again and Kwang Hsu was imprisoned in the little jewel-like Ying T'ai palace on a tiny island in a lotus-bedecked lake, whence he never emerged and where he died, within two days of the Em-

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press Dowager, and probably not by nature's design. Thus ended a nine-months' revolution in a three-thousand-year-old country, a drama of high color and tragic import, and a last, faint hope of averting catastrophe.

The *coup d'état* left reaction in the saddle and riding hard. Reform was triumphantly crushed; there remained only its motivating cause, anti-foreignism and resentment of invasion. And this was being whipped to frenzy by the alienations of territory in 1898, the proclamation of the spheres of influence and other signs of approaching doom. At first with the benevolent neutrality of the court and reactionary nobles and later with their covert support, the Boxer societies gathered strength with the cry of extermination of the foreigner. The Boxers were at first anti-dynastic as well as anti-foreign, but skillful manipulation turned their efforts entirely against the foreigner. The results are known. Missionaries were hunted down and killed and the legations in Peking besieged. The foreign expeditions arrived and took summary vengeance. The court fled in terror, returning only to sign a treaty of abject submission. Reaction, too, was crushed. The last defense of the old régime had been lowered. It lost its spirit. Whether by sincere conviction or not, even the Manchu nobility gave itself to change.

As often when a reform party has been defeated by reaction on the ground that reform is dangerous and unnecessary, only to find its program later taken over by the victorious reactionary elements—because compelled by the underlying sentiment which the reform party was

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vocalizing—so it was in China. A few years later the court was encouraging all manner of departures from the sanctities it had so zealously protected. In 1905 the examination system was abolished and a ministry of education created to institute a system of modern schools, a number of which had already been started in the few years previous. A National Assembly was ordered convoked in 1910 and provincial assemblies in 1909, though with meager powers. A nine-year program of constitutional development was laid down, providing an increase of popular rights in graduated stages, evenly paced with the spread of education, which was in time to be universal. While the decree laying down the program specifically says that “any impetuosity shown in introducing these reforms will, at the end, be so much labor lost,” a warning which China has not yet taken to heart, there was still a pathetic innocence in the belief that nine years was not precipitate. At the same time official encouragement was given to the establishment of modern industrial enterprises, which had already been multiplying since 1894 without encouragement. As a matter of fact, this was the only kind of change which had any solidity through all this period—or to this day, for that matter. A new commercial class had grown up in the ports and was reaching out for the new instruments of creating wealth. Mills had been started, and semi-modern banks and semi-modern enterprises of all kinds. Their positive influence stopped dead fifty miles from the coast, but a deposit had been laid. And no matter what beliefs men may think they hold, when their habits change they, too,

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have changed in everything that counts. With or without official sanction, China had begun to surrender to the new world.

The government's repentance was too late. Its foundation was already crumbling. Its rottenness had been too glaringly exposed by the Boxer uprising and the aftermath. The forces of discontent and disruption had been released. There was no checking them. Political revolution had also been gathering momentum, spurred by that amazing Cantonese zealot, Sun Yat-sen. In 1911 a trivial incident in Hankow precipitated the conclusion. The Manchu dynasty was overthrown, the monarchy abolished, and—probably without the intention of most of those who had supported the anti-dynastic revolution—a republic proclaimed. All that really was achieved was the overthrow of the monarchy; for a republic was proclaimed, but there was no republic. There is no republic yet. There is now and has been since 1911 only interregnum. What 1911 definitively signalized was what the *coup d'état* of 1898 foredoomed—the destruction of all hope for systematic, orderly and peaceful transition from the old to the new.

CHAPTER VI

BEGINNING OF DISINTEGRATION: POLITICAL

IT was in the machinery of the state that dislocation was first felt. It was the state that bore the direct shock of the impact of the West. As has already been emphasized, the government lay nearest the surface in China. A European statesman once said that if there had been no Austro-Hungarian Empire in the nineteenth century one would have had to be created. In the same way, if there was no government in China of the kind that Western countries were accustomed to dealing with, one had to be created for them. One actually was created for them at their insistence, and then not only that which had been newly created but the machinery of state which had existed before and adequately fulfilled its functions was thrown out of joint, and largely by their interference.

Even after the controversy over isolation was settled by the British victory at Canton there remained an issue which also had to be liquidated by war. This was the right of foreign Powers to deal with the Chinese central government directly and maintain envoys for the purpose. It was to them a natural right, one taken for granted in the intercourse of nations. China refused, first, because it arrogantly did not want to treat with the outer barbarians on a plane of equality and, second, because there was

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no organ of government to carry out such functions. The Chinese government had no ministry of foreign affairs. China had no foreign affairs—and by so much its lot was a happy one, and one that it has been able to look back on with nostalgic longing ever since. Representatives of foreign peoples came bearing tribute and were received as tribute-bearers; that was all. For dealing with foreign representatives as one government with another there was no provision, because there was no need.

It is necessary to observe that even the first wars with the West were treated as local affairs. The treaty of 1842 was negotiated not with Peking or a representative of the Imperial government but first with local officials at Canton, the scene of the fighting, and later with the Viceroy at Nanking, to which the British forces had pushed. The treaty inaugurating relations with the United States in 1844 was signed by the Viceroy and Manchu garrison commander at Canton and the treaty with France by the Viceroy. The treaty concluding the war of 1858 was negotiated with the representatives of the Imperial government but they were delegates appointed *ad hoc* and without conclusive powers. In this treaty, however, it was stipulated that representatives of the Powers thereafter would have the right to reside in Peking and deal directly with the central government on all matters pertaining to foreign relations, and that the government would have to appoint a bureau for the purpose—the board later known as the Tsung Li Yamen.

In the interval, whenever an issue had arisen at any of the newly opened ports, it was treated as a local matter

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and taken up with local officials. And local officials, quite properly feeling that they lacked authority, temporized. They feared to refer questions in dispute to the capital, on the ground that raising embarrassing questions with superiors was costly to the one who did it. Or, they used the necessity of referring to the central government as an effective means of postponing or permanently shelving matters they wished to evade. Or, even if they did actually refer them to Peking, months were required sometimes to get a reply, if only because of distance and poor means of communication. Finally, there was often a tacit agreement between the local officials and the central government that this was a providential means of hoodwinking the clumsy-witted foreigner: each could blame the other for failure to act. Whatever happened, it was an impossible arrangement which led only to stalemating the foreigner, who could champ and rage to no purpose. But it was not only bad faith. It was also inherent in the Chinese system, which operated through delegation of authority with *carte blanche*. And this was a practical recognition of the fact of geography, which excluded any pretense of effective centralization in a country so huge. But it ignored the equally potent and irresistible fact of the nineteenth century: the reduction of distance, the ever further-reaching tentacles of foreign trade, the indispensable part which foreign trade played in industrialism and the ever more intimate interconnections between government and big business—the nineteenth century, in a word. And under those conditions there had to be international relations, even between widely separated coun-

tries, official relations conducted through formal channels.

Driven by the necessities of their own world, the Western Powers secured recognition of this fact and deference to it. Because the Tsung Li Yamen in the course of the decades after 1860 tended to take on the duties of a cabinet council, of which foreign affairs were only a part, the Powers insisted after the Boxer rebellion on the creation of a ministry exclusively charged with foreign affairs; and, as with everything else the Powers insisted on at that time, it was conceded. The Chinese government was forced to centralization, at least as far as foreign affairs were concerned, and at least in foreign affairs to govern and not only supervise. Not only the foreign pressure which could be exercised through ultimatums brought this about. There was also the pressure exercised by what lay behind the foreign governments. As telegraph lines, steamers, and later, railways brought the capital into direct touch with provincial officials, it could play, or attempt to play, an active part in sectional and local concerns. It never succeeded in doing so effectively, but the very attempt, and the possibility of making the attempt, disturbed the historic balance. The machine never operated smoothly thereafter. It ceased to be a machine in the sense of something working automatically. With new and unfamiliar parts added, there was nobody who knew how to work it; but it was kept running as if there were, because it had to be. In result, it was eventually wrecked.

The two properties of a centralized government most nearly indispensable to its proper functioning—a military establishment and financial unification—contributed most

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to its disintegration. And both were, if not endowed by foreign influence, then at least acquired in order to meet the foreign menace. The cry for an army and navy to save the country against invasion became insistent as the nineteenth century wore to a close. A beginning was made toward organizing both: a pathetic beginning. China, to be sure, had had an army before; but its capacity was in keeping with the esteem in which military service was held. To the Chinese the priesthood and the army have been occupations only for those unfit for useful and dignified human service. In consequence, they have been singularly free from the evils of organized clericalism and militarism, though for the latter immunity they may also have paid. The Chinese army until after the Boxer rebellion was negligible, both in fighting capacity and influence. But thereafter a beginning was made in earnest. Under Yuan Shih-k'ai, of whom China was to hear more later, a model army was organized—the nucleus of what is now the curse of China. To a certain extent China's success in virtually emancipating itself from the foreign yoke in the few years after 1925 is attributable to that army, expanded. No doubt, poor as that army is in comparison with Japan's or Europe's, the fact of its existence, with the modern armament with which it is equipped, made the Powers hesitate at undertaking punitive expeditions as lightly as once they did. But mainly China owes its success to the gradual growth and then sudden upsurging of nationalism over the country after the world war—largely as a result of influences released by the war. Then the Powers were confronted by something that ex-

peditions could not check. Chinese mass sentiment and not Chinese soldiers undid what had been done between 1842 and 1914. The army played only a negative part. We shall return to its more positive rôle later.

Before the advent of the West China's fiscal problem was relatively simple. Its revenue was raised primarily from a tax on land, with the addition of a tax on salt. During the Taiping rebellion a tax on the movement of goods in inland commerce was levied, and still remains. The administration of the revenue was also simple. A quota was fixed for each province, in proportion to its wealth, and this sum had to be sent up to the capital to maintain the court and Imperial government. Each province was taxed enough to provide this amount and enough in addition to pay for local administration—and a good deal more to enrich officials; as the dynasty lost morale this extra surplus became ever larger. It was a loose system but a workable one, giving the organization which obtained in China until the last generation. Then there entered the complicating factor of indemnities and the disruptive element of penetration by loans. The war with Japan came to a conclusion in 1894 with an indemnity of \$150,000,000 saddled on China—including extra compensation to Japan for the forced relinquishment of the Liaotung Peninsula. In a country of small-scale commercial and financial operations, a simple credit system and a lack of liquid capital a sum so large could not be speedily raised. Nor was there any machinery or technique for the flotation of domestic bond issues. There was one recourse, and it was made easy. For Europe had already

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discovered how handsomely the combination of government and bank working through loans to weak countries could profit both diplomacy and finance. North Africa and the Turkish Empire had both bartered away their sovereignty to the lure of this combination and the great Powers were building up world empires. They stood ready, even competitively ready, to help China, with no doubt the same end in view. In three years the Russians, French, Germans and British had lent \$225,000,000 in three large loans and some additional millions in smaller amounts. Then came the staggering indemnity for the Boxer uprising—\$330,000,000, secured on the customs revenue, which was being collected and administered by foreigners and was running into respectable figures, enough indeed to have helped China develop its resources without mortgaging them to foreign finance had it not been hypothecated to cover an indemnity, most of which was unjust. Thus China found itself saddled with a debt of half a billion dollars, just at the time when it was under fire from the whole world, when it was rocking under the strains of new forces bearing down from every side, when by the movement of its own history it was at the point of lowest resistance and when it had to seek fresh sources of vitality to meet the demands of a new world. What wonder that it proceeded to reform and reconstruction, hamstrung at the start.

Nor was this all, for the technique of higher financial penetration in those enterprising days was not limited to opportunities opened by wars and indemnities. There was also the happy occasion known as development. The

rivalry for railway concessions gave new openings for loans and they followed in rapid succession. So did loans for other purposes. Not only were they made temptingly easy; they were forced, on occasions with ultimatums and the moving up of gunboats. Now, it may be that the developments which are financed in a materially backward country by foreign loans yield numerous benefits, whether in railways, mines, roads, public utilities or sewer systems. But it is also possible that a country may stagger under the burden of maintaining them. A country living by the older economy must take its material development piecemeal if it is not to become insolvent. It simply cannot carry the overhead, no matter how desirable the improvements. In much the same way a prosperous, profit-paying business can be driven into bankruptcy by a too rapid expansion. The best that a country in such a position can hope for is that it will go into a receivership to the lending country or countries. In that case it will remain a possession until freed by war or some other emergency.

By 1914 China was well on the way to bankruptcy. So reckless had borrowing been that there is even a wide discrepancy in the official estimates of just what China owes, but an average of official and semi-official estimates made in 1922 gives a billion dollars outstanding in foreign and domestic loans. What this means may be seen from calculations of the cost of the service of just the foreign loans. Taking the national government's main sources of revenue in the last two decades as coming from the customs, salt monopoly and railways (in the last few years

the railways have been operating at a loss on account of civil wars) in 1925 the government had from these three sources approximately \$100,000,000. Of this sum \$45,000,000 had to be paid out on only the solidly secured foreign loans, which are only a part of the total. Adding to this not less than \$25,000,000 paid out on account of the Boxer indemnity, there is seventy per cent of the direct revenue of the central government to cover loans.¹ The largest single source of revenue is the customs. An official publication of the customs shows that of the receipts of Haikwan Taels 72,000,000 for the year 1925 (a Haikwan Tael has an average value of 75 cents in American money) there was paid out directly from the customs, which is foreign-administered, Haikwan Taels 27,000,000 on account of four foreign loans, three of them contracted to pay war indemnities. To this must be added Haikwan Taels 30,000,000 for the Boxer indemnity, also secured on the customs revenue, making a total of Taels 57,000,000, or more than three-quarters of the revenue.² China, then, had been given a national government which had not only foreign affairs but fiscal problems—and such fiscal problems that its collapse was furthered, if not assured.

Later the two influences of centralization for military reasons and for financial reasons converged; and to them was added a third. The convergence of the three was

¹ Baylin, J. R., *Foreign Loan Obligations of China*. See under amortization tables. Published by Chinese Government Bureau of Economic Information.

² Wright, Stanley F., *Collection and Disposal of Maritime and Native Customs Since the Revolution of 1911*, p. 273. China Maritime Customs (Shanghai).

final and fatal, but also inevitable, for if they were not wholly inter-related they at least sprang from the same root cause. The urge for modernization was most vigorously directed toward communications, as it still is, and no doubt wisely so. But thereby a sharp issue was raised. There was the question, who was to build the railways? Logically and by every consideration of practical efficiency, the national government, of course—with or without foreign financial and technological help. But this ran counter to two deep currents of feeling throughout the country. The first was the tradition of local autonomy, which was threatened as never before. Administration of the railways from Peking drew local revenues to the capital and also gave Peking a more active influence in purely local affairs. The second was anti-foreign feeling. It was perceived in the provinces that as the central government could not build railways without foreign loans and therefore foreign supervision of the railways to protect the security, the more extensively it embarked on such enterprises the more deeply it fell under foreign control. A movement arose in the provinces therefore for provincially owned and managed railways. It was a preposterous proposal from the point of view of efficiency, but on the whole not much more so than the existing state in Europe, where Italy, Switzerland, The Netherlands, Belgium and Denmark, no bigger than some of the Chinese provinces, each has its own railways. Nevertheless, it was fortunate for China's future that the provincial ambitions were fruitless. They fell through, of course, partly by reason of inexperience and partly by reason of

peculations; but also because the combined weight of the central government's policy, of the interests of high Chinese officials who saw possibilities of rich profits for themselves, and of the ambitions of foreign diplomacy and finance was overwhelming. The government's policy was resisted, however, and its victory resented; and this resentment, mingling with general anti-dynastic feeling, with disaffection which had been mounting since the Boxer settlement and with the revolutionary sentiment which was already in the air, combined to make an inflammatory situation. The attempt of the central government to take over the half-formed railway projects in Szechuen Province, coming on the heels of a new concession granted to a syndicate of the Powers, caused active resistance. Troops were dispatched to put down demonstrations, which were running high, in Szechuen as elsewhere. At the same time there was the discovery of a formal revolutionary plot in Hankow, on the Middle Yangtze, which set off the revolution prematurely but decisively. The year 1911 had struck and the monarchy fallen.

The republic was proclaimed, but republics are not made by fiat. What the revolution did was unmake the monarchy and the machinery of government over which it presided—or, rather, what the revolution did was signalize their unmaking by decades of undermining. One system went; no other was at hand to replace it. The old one may have worked badly, especially when run down, as in the nineteenth century; but it worked. The old mandarinat was, on the whole, corrupt and not very efficient. But it at least had a tradition. There was a tacit law which

did set some limit on self-enrichment at public expense. For one thing, officials were chosen by the examinations, which meant that they were at least educated men. For another, there was a certain amount of supervision by higher officials, which enjoined caution, if not temperance. Finally, there was the check of public wrath, which could operate in normal times but only in normal times. Thus there was a certain code, even of malfeasance. And the majority were bound by the code. With the coming of the republic the old corps of officials was not automatically thrown out; only the Manchus were evicted. The Chinese mandarin is apt at riding horses of every pace, and most of them altered their convictions to meet the needs of the rice-bowl. It is indicative that in the early years of the republic corruption and irresponsibility were not so common as now. In proportion as the old régime dropped out by death, retirement or slow substitution by placemen in favor, conditions have become worse. And now (in 1930) they are at lowest ebb. As the examination system had been abolished in 1905, the spoils system had begun to work even before the republic. There was a deterioration of morale not only so far as graft was concerned, but also in discipline, attention to duty, sense of responsibility and administrative capacity. In the place of men who at least had had one kind of tradition and recognized one code there succeeded those who had no education of any kind, no sense of propriety, no background at all; they were upstarts on the make. The statement is made subject to the usual reservations for generalizations—there were in the early days of the re-

public and there still are officials of honor and punctilio—but with those reservations it holds. The hackneyed explanation is that the republic is the cause, that China is unsuited for a republic, that it is unfitted for self-government, etc., etc. This is manifestly absurd. What happened is that a stable system and a set of values which had binding force collapsed. No matter what had succeeded, the result would have been the same. The moral anarchy which follows whenever an old morality has to be discarded applies no less in affairs of government. It pervades every phase of life in China. It naturally manifested itself first in politics, because, once more, the government met the first shock of the impact of the new. The fact that the monarchy was overthrown by a republic is immaterial.

Now it is necessary to return to the two other influences of disruption—militarism and finance. A mass movement started the revolution of 1911, but it was concluded by something much more highly organized, namely, the model army trained by Yuan Shih-k'ai. It was his army that held the balance of power in the short period of fighting and then turned the scale against the Manchus. But Yuan was no republican. He neither understood nor sympathized, and for the doctrinaire young men who shouted pat phrases acquired in a few years at American undergraduate colleges he had scant respect—not without some ground, as time has proved. Yuan was of the old mandarin strain, with all its virtues and equally numerous defects. He cast in his lot with the republic and gave lip-service to its phrases as long as he had to; but

he held the reins. By subtle and oblique maneuvers he forced his election as president and then proceeded to consolidate himself against the time when he could give the *coup de grâce* to the new-fangled nonsense. In this he had invaluable assistance from the source which had become decisive. This was the foreigner and his loans.

From the beginning the republic was a tug-of-war between Yuan and the sincere but unsophisticated younger men of the Kuomintang, which was then the republican and now is the nationalist party. Yuan yielded on non-essentials but unremittingly fortified himself. He had his army and it needed to be increased and fully armed. Also he needed money. Government finances had been left straitened by the war and the disorganization which followed. And the representatives of foreign finance hovered about, accommodating, willing and eager; and at their elbows were the diplomats pledging the support of their respective governments and armies and navies. A six-Power Consortium had been formed by Great Britain, France, Germany, Russia, Japan and the United States to wield a monopoly of lending privileges to China. Negotiations were opened, more or less secretly and amid a swamp of international financial intrigue, for a so-called Reorganization Loan of £25,000,000, to be secured on the government salt monopoly—the Salt Gabelle—of which foreigners were henceforth to have control. The provisions of the loan, especially the infringement of China's sovereignty, brought forth a cogent protest from President Wilson, who withdrew the American government's support from the Consortium and the

American banking group dropped out. The Chinese who had brought the republic about were incensed. They saw in the loan the prelude to bankruptcy and a foreign receivership on the model of Egypt. Still more, they saw in it the means of underwriting Yuan Shih-k'ai's ambitions for a dictatorship and the scuttling of all hopes for reform.

A parliament was sitting in China then and by the provisions of the temporary constitution its consent was necessary for all foreign loans, a fact of which the foreign bankers and foreign Legations were well aware. Parliament refused its sanction, and so notified the Legations. But the loan was signed nevertheless in April, 1913, by the Minister of Finance on the fiat of Yuan Shih-k'ai and with the blessing of the foreign diplomats. Parliament declared the loan to be illegal and warned that it would not be recognized when Yuan Shih-k'ai had been dealt with. And it is pertinent to recall that the Speaker of the House who made the round of the Legations formally to protest and notify them of the warning is now (1930) the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Nationalist government and that in his incumbency the foreign control of the Salt Gabelle has been ruthlessly and disrespectfully curbed. Even in the course of imperialism time works its little ironies.

Yuan Shih-k'ai had his £25,000,000, however. Part of it went to pay off advances made by European banks and part to clear up legitimate outstanding accounts of the government and a large part for the purpose for which Yuan Shih-k'ai wanted the loan and was willing to barter

away part of the government's sovereignty—the building up of a strong army with which to do away with republicans and reformers. His first step was summarily to dismiss parliament. Shortly afterward there was another revolution, provoked by too summary and callous assassinations, but Yuan Shih-k'ai's legions crushed it with Draconian ferocity and Yuan was left in complete mastery. When he thought he was strong enough he proceeded to make himself emperor, but he underestimated the inarticulate sentiment in the country, especially among the younger generation, and in a few months there was another rising and he was forced humbly to abdicate the throne he had not yet dared to assume. And in 1916 he died. Yuan passed, but the army he built up, with the blessing of the foreign Powers and against the warnings of the liberals, remained. So did Yuan's lieutenants, who promptly proceeded to contest his succession. And China's disastrous history from 1916 to the present may be summed up as a series of civil wars to determine which of them would take his place. None has; but the country lies prostrate. China's parasitic, half-bandit army of more than two million men is its curse; and much of the curse is of foreign making. So also much of the advice to get rid of that army is of foreign origin.

China's experience is typical of weak and undeveloped—therefore backward—lands which have the misfortune to draw the attention and fire the ambition of strong countries. All of them are told *ad nauseam* by those who are in the act of swallowing them that if they will but reform and reconstruct and make themselves strong—

"set their house in order," is almost the litany—they will recover their independence and incidentally not tempt strong countries to encroach on them and thus cause wars among the strong for the privilege of encroaching. It never, incidentally, is revealed by what law of God or man strong countries are constrained to plunder weak ones and thereby condemn themselves to a death-struggle for the loot. The omission, however, never detracts from the solemnity of the advice. But it is the experience of every weak and undeveloped country which has great Powers athwart its chest that if it ever does make a serious start to reform and set its house in order as a preliminary to being strong enough to be independent, the representatives of the Powers which have pinned it down obstruct its efforts by every subtle stratagem and eventually, if necessary, by force. Sometimes the process is unconscious, sometimes bald; but it never is lacking.

It was not lacking in China even before 1913. In 1898, when the Emperor Kwang Hsu set out on his hysterical and ill-starred reforms, the whole weight of the moral influence of the foreign diplomats and bankers was thrown against him; and the weight of their influence at that time was not inconsiderable. And after the Boxer rebellion when the Powers were dictating the future of China and had it in their hands to determine who should wield its government, they replaced on the throne the ultra-reactionary, blindly bigoted Empress Dowager. When the republic was launched by men whose sincerity, patriotism and dedication to the service of their country cannot be impugned, whatever may be said of their practical wis-

dom, not only did they not get the moral support of the diplomats and bankers; they were openly or covertly opposed, and by no means covertly sneered at. There was no belief in what they were attempting, no tolerant attitude of waiting to see, no neutrality. It was entirely to the contrary.

This was not wholly insincere. Those who represent foreign diplomacy, finance and commerce in distant, weak and different lands are temperamentally not very plastic. They are not conspicuously progressive. If not wholly akin to empress dowagers, they speak the same language, respond to the same impulses and can strike a quick rapport. And like almost all foreign residents in China they held by the sacred truism that there could be no solution for China except a "strong man." It was their sovereign remedy. If there were any hope of applying it today, that still would be their one prescription. And of course a dictator, whether strong or weak, had his advantages for the Powers. Naturally they wanted no real republic, with constitutional checks, representatives of the people in legislative bodies asking uncomfortable questions, public opinion and widespread public consciousness; naturally not. For such a country would insist on its sovereignty, would not permit the bartering away of its resources and would strive for means of self-defense. What the Powers wanted was the status quo: a country which would remain backward, in that its government was weak and ineffective, and progressive, in that it would have material development by and for the profit of foreign interests. And if the status quo could not be maintained, then what was wanted

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was a dictator, one who would have unrestricted power but whose strength would depend on foreign buttressing, wherefore he would be complaisant. He would get the means of keeping himself in power; foreign interests would get concessions for exploiting the resources of the country for their own profit.

There were a few fatal flaws in this reasoning. It assumed that a dictator really could rule the country, and that Yuan could be that dictator, whereas at the first test Yuan collapsed, partly because it is in the nature of a dictator to overreach himself. Further, there was the assumption that Yuan was immortal, whereas he lived only three years more. And it is the experience of all history everywhere that even when a dictatorship works out for the good of the country dictated to, the dictatorship dissolves with the passing of the dictator, after which conditions are worse than before the dictatorship. In the first place, the dictator has wiped out everything that went before him; when he goes there is first vacuum, then chaos. In the second place, all that has been pent up during the dictatorship bursts forth, all the malignant sores that the dictatorship only covered up instead of curing run more poisonously than before. The net result of the whole period is that resistance to the infections which presumably necessitated the cure by dictatorship has been lowered.

There was a third flaw in foreign reasoning. This was that educated Chinese would not recognize that a dictatorship doomed them to double servitude—both native and foreign. So long as a country stays by the older

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economy of household production and local self-sufficiency, with a loose organization of semi-autonomous communities, an Oriental despotism may be satisfactory. The interests of the population are not necessarily jeopardized. But modernization implies centralization; it requires centralization. It inevitably integrates a system, so that from a central point any part of the system can be affected for better or worse. When there are railways, telegraphs, factories producing for a wide area, banks controlling credit for a highly evolved economic organization, then local self-sufficiency is done and local autonomy impossible. Communities have been linked up. Then a despotism ceases to be symbolical. Its power is not limited to cutting off the heads of the recalcitrant who are within reach. Then it holds the welfare and happiness, even the livelihood, of the masses of a country in its hands—either the despot himself or those who wield economic power and who use him for their purpose. In other words, under industrialism there must be at least some public check, if only the defective and clumsy check of representative government. The alternative is a serfdom, the most abject and degrading serfdom known to man—a factory serfdom.

When, therefore, it appeared to the Chinese necessary to modernize, it was also necessary for them to adapt their form of government to the social conditions of modernization. There had to be a ministry of communications, a bureau of railways, a ministry of commerce. There had to be organs of regulation and supervision. That is to say, with the power over individuals which the concentra-

tion of capital in an industrial age gives, there had to be a collective check on that power on behalf of the people who as individuals were helpless—the problem of self-government in the machine age. Given modernization, there must then be industrial slavery or a form of government which is more directly activist and which embodies a certain degree of popular control. And modernization was given in China; it was, in fact, forced from without. The choice for Chinese who understood what was before them was between a dictatorship which would be a pawn of foreign industrial and financial exploiters working their way on a helpless race or some form of constitutionalism. What kind of constitutionalism, whether a republic or a constitutional monarchy, was immaterial; it was immaterial also in the result. For if the Chinese could make a constitutional monarchy go they could also make a republic go—a fact conveniently overlooked by all those who deplore the republic on the ground that Oriental people must have a king, etc., etc.

The dictatorship of Yuan Shih-k'ai was, however, a feeble and fleeting thing. It did not leave behind it the ugly sequelæ of successful dictatorships. As might have been foreseen from the beginning, it was doomed to futility. But what it did do and what the foreign support of Yuan did bring about was the demoralization of early reform and republican enthusiasms, the frustration of efforts to make an easier transition, the saddling on the country of a voracious army led by plundering and ambitious generals, and the acceleration of a political disintegration which in any case could not have been prevented

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but which might have been ameliorated. At least, new foundations might have been laid to replace the old. As it happened, they were not; and China is now baseless. Over-correct foreign diplomats and over-glib foreign correspondents may paint their pictures of present conditions with the patronizing inflections of sorrow more than anger which infuriate not only Chinese. They may look at surface phenomena and cry chaos with aching monotony. But it could not have been otherwise. There have been causes, and these are the effects.

CHAPTER VII

BEGINNING OF DISINTEGRATION: ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, CULTURAL

FOR decades after the West had established itself in China native institutions other than political showed little trace of its influence. Except in coast or river towns where foreigners had deposited small islands out of another world there was little outward sign of change. In villages fifty miles away the peasant's life went its placidly monotonous round as from time immemorial and as if the West and the pulsing life of its cities were on another planet. Yet there was already sapping underneath. The figure is apt, in that there was nothing perceptible on the surface until, the supports being worn away, everything above collapsed quickly and suddenly—which is a summation of China in 1930.

The economic effects were the first to manifest themselves, since by their nature they are, after the political, the most tangible. Even a loosely organized and unintegrated economy can be delicately balanced, if only in the mutual independence of its parts. And an alien element thrust into it, unassimilable and yet too resistant to be cast out, destroys its equilibrium. One such element was the establishment of foreign trading centers like Hongkong, Shanghai, Hankow and Tientsin. By their dynamic force and vitality they began to draw the country's

strength. They changed its magnetic drift. In the first place, they offered opportunity. In the second place, because they were in effect foreign territory although on Chinese soil, they offered immunity from Chinese governmental restriction and interference. In the third place, they offered security, both from disturbances which made property less safe and from the rapacities of officialdom, which increased in proportion as the grip of the monarchy relaxed. In the fourth place, they offered special privileges, because Chinese in the foreign concessions could enjoy, at one remove, the preferential position of the foreigner. It was but the operation of the law of gravitation for capital to flow to foreign ports, there to be kept in foreign banks or placed in foreign enterprises or Chinese enterprises which were satellites of the foreign. Until recent years the only great concentrations of capital in the country, with all the power thereby conveyed, were in the outports. Only in the last few years have there been modern banks with extensive credit facilities under Chinese ownership and management. Trade and interests naturally followed capital. Thus there was set up a condition of divided loyalties, national feeling pulling in one direction and vested interests in another—an inherently unhealthy condition at best. Thus also, at a time when all China's resources should have been mobilized to buttress China's stability and to serve as a foundation for a new economic order those resources were being drawn off to add effectiveness to the weapon which, directly or indirectly, was leveled at China's stability.

What happens in a non-industrialized country when

machine-made goods are suddenly thrown into the market is an old story. It has been seen everywhere in the world in the last hundred years. The native hand-product is driven from the market both by the novelty and the cheapness of the machine product, an industry is destroyed, workers are thrown out of employment and forced to find new crafts or go under, and a link is torn out of the economic chain. Where the factory product is imported, there is not even the opportunity for readjustment by turning the displaced workmen to factories for making the machinery that displaced them. The link can never be restored. In time the whole chain must be shattered and a new one forged. That is to say, the country must be able itself to industrialize, so that it can regain self-sufficiency, as self-sufficiency is understood in the industrial era. Until then it is economically disjointed, if not crippled; and the interval is not short, cannot be short. Both capital and technological skill and experience are required. Without capital there can be no industrialization but, also, until there is industrialization there can be no capital, that is, liquid, mobile capital. A country which is strong and independent can obtain foreign loans on purely financial terms—payment of interest and repayment of principal. So America obtained the means by which to develop its natural resources. But a country weak, ineffectively governed—from the Western point of view—and subject to alien aggression can obtain foreign loans only on terms that are political as well as financial, that entail a surrender of its sovereign rights—concretely, a certain degree of foreign control of the government. In

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that case such a country will be doubly handicapped in undertaking industrialization: on the one hand by lack of capital and technological skill and on the other by restriction on its freedom of decision and its control of its own destiny. Its development will more likely be determined not by itself and in its own interest but by the foreigner and in the direction of the foreigner's profit.

China has been no exception to the rule. In fact, it illustrated the rule with paradigmatic fidelity. The beginning was in textiles. As in India, Manchester poured in cotton piece goods in mounting quantities after the formal opening of trade and by 1890 British cotton exports to China came to nearly 15,000,000 pounds of cotton yarn and 570,000,000 yards of cotton cloth. The Chinese hand-loom had not been stilled, to be sure, since transportation was still too difficult except on the main arteries, but countless thousands had lost their occupations. Not until this time were the first modern spinning and weaving mills started, the earliest being Chinese-owned and rather timid ventures. The first efficient mills of any extensive productive capacity were British, followed by Japanese. Not until the world war curtailed European exports did the Chinese cut any real figure in machine production of textiles, and even today it has been estimated that it still imports twice as much cloth as it is making itself.¹ For more than a generation, then, there has been a dislocation of one of its principal in-

¹ Estimate made by Bernard Ellinger in paper read before Manchester (England) Statistical Society, November 9, 1927.

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dustrial activities, with all the chain of consequences that always follow from economic dislocation.

What took place in textiles was repeated on a smaller scale in other fields. A large proportion of Chinese has always been engaged in the carrying trade, as carters, small boatmen, wheelbarrowmen or, literally, carriers. It is a wasteful form of transport, but the whole economic system being attuned to it, it was neither out of key nor relatively inefficient. At any rate it provided a livelihood for a part of the population, which at least functioned economically. To go into any detailed analysis of what railways, steamships and now motor vehicles have done to these men would be laboring the point. They have deprived them of a means of livelihood, in short. The concrete results are unfortunate. A few years ago there was an international incident at Wanh sien on the Yangtze River in which first a Chinese mob and then Chinese troops attacked a British gunboat, which fired in return, with deaths on both sides. The dispute went back in origin to a high state of popular feeling over the fact that steamships were taking cargoes which always had been carried in native junks. International clashes are not the only dramatic symptoms. There are more serious ones, involving social health. Organized banditry is another. In China banditry does not spring from lawlessness. Instead, it has always been a barometer of economic conditions. Now, many factors enter into a state in which hundreds of thousands are without means of support: mis-government, civil wars, predatory soldiery, official robbery by confiscatory taxation, long droughts, famine. But un-

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doubtedly another potent factor is compulsory unemployment resulting from the introduction of machinery and machine-made commodities. Labor-saving devices may be efficient and profitable, but they can also be fatal. And in China today many are robbing because only that way can they secure subsistence.

Economic consequences bore social consequences in their train inevitably. Banditry is one example, a more easily recognizable one. There were others, even more serious, at least reaching down deeper. The foreign concessions drew not only capital, but population. Chinese were needed as office and warehouse employees, as clerks and domestic servants, later as factory hands. Shopkeepers, artisans and others selling personal services came first to serve the foreigner and then for the other Chinese. Even those who did not change their occupations in time insensibly changed their ways of living. They contracted new habits out of the environment. They had to. The environment demanded it. Also they wanted to. The foreigner's ways are contagious. His command of comfort gives them an appeal. So also does his apparent Midas touch. His income to an Oriental is fabulous. His standard of living is princely. His house is warmer and more convenient. He has more leisure. Luxuries are his daily portion. Class for class, his life is infinitely richer in material things. By his very presence he exercises a proselyting effect which in time becomes conversion and denationalization.

In time the Chinese—or, it may be the Hindu, Arab or Bantu—rides in street cars, uses kerosene lamps or

electric light instead of guttering wicks floating in peanut oil, communicates by telephone or telegraph, travels by railway or automobile bus and, if he prospers, builds himself a foreign house with wooden floors and electric light and bathrooms and, unfortunately, mongrelloid furniture that is of no hemisphere but blends the hideous in both. How many a patrician of Peking, whose tastes are infallible and intuitions sure when moving among the things of his own background, sits in a Grand Rapids mission chair sipping tea out of a violently beflowered tea-cup which he sets on a fringed doily of the atrocious 1880's, the while his eye roams too tolerantly over a chromo on a wall in which a lady stands on a pseudo-Italian terrace pensively kissing a dove. And when he would go to an official function in style he discards his delicately patterned and subtly-shaded silks for a stiff collar and morning coat, ugly at best and monstrous when badly worn. For it seems to be as true in esthetics as in morals, that there are no absolutes and that a sense of values cannot be transferred to completely unfamiliar categories. One with an unfailing sense of beauty and artistic integrity in the tradition to which he was born will be lost in a tradition completely alien. And his judgments and selections will be as bad as those of aliens untutored in their own tradition. They will quite likely be for the tawdry and vulgar. Also it appears to be a law of comparative cultures that when two cultures meet each will show its worst face to the other and each will first take from the other that which is lowest. When two meet and one must give way to the other, what is most destructive

to those of the culture which is conquered and must pass is that they lose self-respect, both in person and in culture. They develop a sense of inferiority. When they would acquire kudos, they adopt an air of patronage toward the things that were of their forefathers and take instead an imitation of the things that are of the conquering culture. And it comes to be accepted as a sign of superiority and sophistication to live in a foreign house, wear foreign clothes, try to follow a foreign code of manners. And this is the highest price paid for cultural defeat.

Now, it is no far-fetched psychological theory that when a people has made a violent break with its habits and customs it has also exposed itself to a new outlook on life. In fact, a change in ways of living entails a change in ideas. As the Chinese adopted foreign ways, by so much they ceased to be Chinese. They did not become foreign. They only began to drift unconsciously into a cultural twilight zone. They were slowly cutting from their moorings, from all that held them steady. What began among the Chinese in the foreign concessions slowly worked further and further into the country. A village peasant by a railway track is a different village peasant from what he was before. And when he goes to market-towns lit by electric light, sees rice polished by machinery and looks at shops storing canned foods or bicycles or machine parts or imported soap or socks or toothpaste, the remaking of his life has begun—not only his own life but the society in which it is laid. The process will be imperceptibly slow at first, but it goes forward by geometric progression. Only in the cities which have more directly

felt the new influences are the Chinese already in the stage of complete break from their past, but the tendency has already gathered so much momentum that the future can be plotted with the definiteness of a blue-print.

Something more than psychological influence was at work. Of the Chinese that flocked to the foreign concessions and the cities that built up around them, attracted by the possibilities of earning more—or what looked like more, measured in currency—nearly all separated themselves from their families. Many were joined later by their immediate families, as are immigrants in the United States; but even these were separated from the family in the Chinese sense, as already described. The horizontal patriarchy, with communal sharing of property and communal exercise of authority through elders, was left behind. When it is remembered that the family organization was law-giver, judge and source and enforcing agent of morals, what this means can readily be seen. Even without the intrusion of alien influences and the solvent of new habits and ideas, this would have been enough to cause the breaking down of standards and the moral confusion which now exists. In almost none of the foreign ports or industrial centers is more than a small minority of the resident Chinese population native to the place. The others have come in from neighboring rural regions and small towns or even from a distance to fill the demand for factory labor. In Yangtzepoo, the industrial district of Shanghai, or in Pootung, across the Huangpu river from Shanghai, one may find natives of half a dozen provinces. The ricksha coolies and wheelbarrow coolies in

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Shanghai, Hankow, Tientsin or Peking are all from outside the immediate vicinity of the city. A large proportion are men living alone. A large proportion have brought their wives down and set up a separate establishment. All are rootless.

Descriptions of the Lancashire mill towns in the early nineteenth century show the social problems raised even in the West with the bringing together in new factory towns of large masses unused to urban conditions. And in England the contrast was less violent, the break less sharp, for those who constituted the new factory proletariat. Yet those social problems have not yet been wholly allayed in England. In China they are just beginning to show their full seriousness, and in proportion as they reveal themselves is the real "breakdown" of China made manifest, though those who observe it and write in the Occidental press in horror at its manifestation confine themselves to repetitive description and ignore the cause. The preservation of the family discipline is conditional on all the members living together or within immediate range and more or less following the same occupations. And in the case of artisans or shopkeepers and of peasants in almost the same degree the work was in the household or centered around the household. Communal control was not an artificial superimposition, but arose naturally and spontaneously out of living conditions. But obviously such conditions are incompatible with the life of a factory worker, especially one in a newly industrialized country without the social safeguards which have gradually been thrown up in the West. The horizontal

family, with several collateral branches living together, cannot be maintained in Shanghai or Hankow. There is no family homestead or compound, however lowly, as there was in the native hsien. Different branches scatter out wherever their work happens to be. They may be huddled in newly thrown up barracks or boarding in warrens, three or four families in a room or twenty men sleeping side by side on the floor. Not only family discipline is lost but family identity, the unity which a home can give, though impoverished.

This tendency, too, is running in the heart of the country. With the gradual extension of facilities of communication the country is being linked together. The village is becoming less and less a self-sufficient unit, locked within itself by distance. Railways and now automobile buses are giving a hitherto unexperienced freedom of movement which is being taken advantage of. Not quite villages yet but hsien towns, or county seats, tend to become interdependent. Manufactured goods from the industrial towns and even imported commodities are finding their way into the interior and a habit of dependence on the world outside the city walls is being formed. Also, not only persons but ideas are moving with greater freedom. More sons are going away to modern schools, and now such elementary schools as there are give modern education only—translated, it may be, through the Chinese point of view, but yet revolutionary as tested by the concepts or learning of the past. Discipline is harder to enforce, restraints are let down, individuals harder to curb. Family law is not inviolate and group con-

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trol not unquestioned. The spirit of individualism, the spirit of the West and of the times, is abroad. It will not be dimmed. By all the laws of dynamics it cannot be. Its full force will not be felt in the hinterland for some time, but in the end it will be irresistible. Taken in the long view, the village and clan may be said to have lost their integrity.

Another result of economic dislocation through the creation of new commercial and industrial centers has been the infringement of the integrity of the guild. As already explained, the guild could function as the organ of economic administration and control only because production was organized in small units and every element in each trade was within the immediate supervision and physical reach of its guild. Production was for the local market only and both manufacture and distribution could be checked; and each production unit was so small and the number of workers in each so few that the personal relation between employer and worker simplified the labor problem. It was a human problem rather than a labor problem as we understand the word. The indispensable condition for the proper functioning of the guild was the self-contained community. But obviously this condition cannot coexist with factory production and easy transportation. When flour is milled in Shanghai and distributed over an area of three hundred miles a local guild cannot enforce price restrictions. It is impossible for a guild to attempt to regulate the trade practices and credits of large corporations without an extensive administrative superstructure. Furthermore, nearly every

modern industry crosses half a dozen trade lines. Nearly every factory falls within the scope of a number of guilds. Again, guild rulings cannot be enforced. A directorate cannot be practicably held to accounting, nor can a boycott be made effective against a single firm over an area of, say, ten thousand square miles. Finally, with factories employing fifty to two hundred men the personal contact between employer and worker is lost. There can be no common discussion of their joint problems. There are no joint problems. Whatever community of interest there may be in the abstract is overshadowed by concrete divergence and there is an inevitable cleavage into two camps, with the emergence of class consciousness and class antagonism. There is, in short, a labor problem. This has already come about in China wherever industrialism has begun.

Theoretical analysis is unnecessary to demonstrate that the guild cannot survive under conditions of industrialism and easy communications. Proof can already be adduced from the event. There are still guilds, but in all large centers and many small ones there are also chambers of commerce. The first ones were formed after 1900 and there are now considerably more than a thousand; the official count in 1915 was 869. They cannot be said to be usurping the functions of the guild. It is more accurate to say that the guild's functions are passing because the conditions to which it is adapted and out of which it grew are passing. While the guilds still exist, even in cities like Hankow, Tientsin or Wusih, or wherever factories have established themselves in numbers, their

rôle is subordinate except where the traces of industrialism are only faint. Everywhere else the chamber of commerce has taken over the rôle of spokesman for the world of business and intermediary between business and government. When officials would sound public opinion they approach the chamber of commerce first. Civic and communal matters which once were the jurisdiction of the guilds are now the province of the chamber of commerce. The guild is no longer adequate to the needs of the times and is losing its sovereignty over the economic world. Like the machinery of political government, the machinery of economic government has broken down.

The attacks made on the traditional system of education by the times and by the direct efforts of Chinese desirous of modernization have already been touched on. The demand for an effective army and navy came first, then the demand for factories and railways, then for a new system of education. It was realized early that to be equipped for the modern world the Chinese people must have a broader base of learning than the Confucian canons afforded. The mandates projecting the abortive reforms of the Emperor Kwang Hsu in 1898 already showed that the progressive elements wanted the outright abandonment of the old system, and there was a respectable body of moderate opinion which wanted its dilution by Western learning. The Viceroy Chang Chih-tung, already referred to, in his famous book, *Exhortation to Learning*, which electrified the Chinese world in 1898, proposed the abolition of the historic state examinations and the substitution of a system of schools and

universities in which old and new learning were blended. His curriculum, outlined in detail, provided for history, geography, mathematics, the elements of science and foreign languages as well as the Classics, emphasis on which was much reduced. The mandates of Kwang Hsu dwelt repeatedly on the need of a practical education and a "knowledge of the world and of things going on outside China." The cry was for utilitarian education, a swing to the opposite extreme.

In 1903 a modern school system was formally authorized and in 1905 the old examinations were abolished, but even before then the old education was discredited. The rush of Chinese students to Japan after the Sino-Japanese war, when 15,000 young men are estimated to have gone in a few years, was proof. The Chinese no longer believed implicitly in the efficacy, adequacy or utility of their own education, of what through their long history had been accepted unquestioningly as the ultimate of wisdom and the repository of all knowledge. It no longer commanded their respect and thereby lost its potency. As has already been said, what constituted education in China was more than a body of learning and an intellectual discipline. It was also a conservator of values and a transmitter of morals. It crystallized, preserved and passed down from generation to generation the concepts which gave the race unity and a sense of its own dignity and worth. It was the agency for the diffusion of the culture which gave the race homogeneity and a sense of singular identity, despite all the influences making for disparity—distance and differences in temperament, lan-

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guage and customs. When therefore the traditional Chinese education lost respect and was, in effect, discarded, the basis of China's culture was lost—culture not only in its abstract sense but as the cement of the structure of society. Again, China was left groping and without secure footing.

The passing of the old did not mean the substitution of the new. Western education, cut from its associations in the West, is arid. It means "subjects," mutually unrelated and without source of inspiration. The curriculum of an American college, duplicated exactly in a Chinese college, does not have the same content. It does not communicate the same meaning or spirit. It cannot, for it lacks the background which cannot be translated into words and for which words are lacking, for it is the heritage of a race. Further, there has been neither the time nor the money to institute modern schools. Nor is there a sufficiently clear grasp of the implications of a modern school system and modern education. Even for the Chinese educator with Western training modern education is too recently acquired for him to be really at home in it, to know how to propagate it most efficiently; in the sheer matter of technique he is lacking. To be sure, the same may be said for Western educators in the West. They, too, are groping, even in their own setting, as attested by the confusion in the educational world, where there is not even agreement on what education is. What has happened in China, then, is that for all practical purposes there is no education at all now and there has been none for a generation, none, that is, that carries the con-

viction of the old. Not only is the foundation undermined of what has been, but there are no materials yet for the laying of a new one. There is no foundation. Naturally what lies above is wavering and, in parts, toppling.

Something must be said at this point of the part which missionaries have played. It is a difficult subject to discuss, so overladen is it with passions, prejudices and feelings lying too deep for rational examination. It is a subject which cannot be raised anywhere in the East without acrimony. Reference has already been made to the missionaries' share in exposing the weakness of the Chinese government to the Chinese people and thus contributing to its loss of authority. They have had a much more active share in the more serious disintegration now under discussion. It is flung at missionaries by nationalistic Chinese that they are the advance guard of imperialistic aggression. If by this is meant that they consciously went out to bring about the absorption of China by the Western Powers, it is, of course, unfair as well as untrue. But if, instead, it is meant that, although perhaps unconsciously, they did contribute to China's real subjugation by the West it is true. The missionaries were the shock troops of cultural conquest.

The missionaries were the carriers of influences of disruption. It was they who first spread throughout the interior the contagion of the foreigner's way of living, the effect of which we have seen in the foreign ports. Every mission compound, with its comforts and conveniences and devices for saving work and energy, struck at China's independence, in the deeper sense. It accelerated the ra-

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diations from the outports. Thus it speeded up the whole process of psychological alienation. The missionaries also resorted to a more conscious and direct method of accomplishing the same result. As part of the technique of evangelization they opened schools. Thus they obtained "prospects," for the Chinese hunger for learning overcame the dislike for the foreigner and his doctrine, especially after a premium had been put on Western learning. For many years the only modern schools in the country were those conducted by Christian missionaries. Almost to the present day the only good ones were Christian. The best are Christian even now. When, therefore, the drive for Western learning began after the Sino-Japanese war, it led straight to the mission schools and colleges. The result was not very many Christians or very much Christianity, but a quickening of the process of uprooting.

Every mission school was an instrument of denationalization. The pupils were taught, not as Chinese children preparing to share in the life of the Chinese race but as American children, and with all the limitations of American schooling before it was vitalized by the unorthodox theories of the last twenty-five years. Of literature the Chinese children learned English literature. Of history they learned American history, with some English and a faint smattering of European and what is professionally known as "Ancient." They solemnly committed to memory the names of foreign kings and battles. Except in the English mission schools, which were a minority and which could not command such lavish donations from the pious at home, zealous for leading the heathen out of darkness,

the cosmology was that of a world which began in all earnestness in 1776. And it is not too much of a caricature to say that thousands of Chinese children grew to the age of sixteen without any clear knowledge that there had ever existed on this planet more than three men worthy of emulation—Christ, George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. In small towns a thousand miles inland, where no white man had ever been seen except the resident missionaries and few more ever would be seen, Chinese boys were dazedly plodding through Burke's *Speech on Conciliation*. To this day, in the Christian school for girls which is best known and which draws its student body from the more prosperous and better-educated classes, girls of fourteen and fifteen—Chinese girls, who are to bear Chinese children to live in China—are made to read and "explain" Spenser's *Faërie Queene*. Two years earlier they have had to read *The Merchant of Venice*. It is incredible; and it is true. In intent, at least, it was the intellectual, imaginative, cultural, spiritual deflowering of a generation. And if only a part of the generation actually was so subjected, it was not the fault of the intention but the lack of time and means.

In this, of course, there was nothing Mephistophelean, Machiavellian or sinister; it was not always even deliberate. To be sure, a large proportion of early missionaries unconsciously but unshakably believed that civilization consisted of the tenets, customs and expansive intellectual outlook of their American Middle Western or English provincial villages—the American Middle Western village of the mid-nineteenth century, remember. And they

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bent their efforts to reproducing those effects in China—or India or wherever they happened to be. But mainly the explanation is to be found in the fact that to the great majority of the early missionaries it had never occurred that there was any education except what they had “taken” in grade schools and high schools—if they had gone to high schools. They had not heard and would not have believed that there had been education in China before they came or before there were any literates in England or America. When confronted with uncontrovertible evidence in the form of Chinese books, they could always explain it away by the fact that the books were of heathen inspiration. They had come to “save” China. Among the means to that end was education. The Chinese themselves were aware of the need of a more general education. And this was education—what one had learned in American schools, generally village schools and freshwater colleges.

With regard to missionary methods and missionary results in general much is to be explained by the personal factor. With all due recognition of the splendor of self-dedication to a cause from which there could be no private gain and which entailed harsh sacrifices and many risks, it must be said that the great majority of missionaries came from a class which had had few opportunities, intellectual or social. This has changed in recent years, when a large proportion, especially those who direct policies and give the tone to the work, are men and women who have had college educations and know something of the world. But in the period when missionary proselyting could not be so successfully resisted because both the Chinese peo-

ple and their government were cowed, the majority of missionaries were ignorant men and women, oblivious of the fact that they were dealing, not with primitive savages but an old and highly civilized people, and indifferent to the fact when apprized of it. For the Chinese were a heathen people—which meant that they were not what is now called Fundamentalists—and that label covered all. On everything Chinese, then, there was the stigma of heathenism. The more everything Chinese was destroyed, the better. As for the minority who were not ignorant and many of whom came to have a high respect for the achievements of the Chinese race, they were sincerely convinced that China's real problem was one of moral regeneration, which could come only through Christianity, for the old Chinese morality had lost its compulsions. In this they were right, but right only insofar as the problem of every country may be one of moral regeneration; and the limited success of Christianity in bringing it about, as demonstrated by the nineteenth century factory towns in England and the United States, might have led them to soften their conclusions as to China.

The missionaries were limited by the nature of their calling. One of the bizarre chapters in the history of comparative culture is this episode of one race, a race comparatively newly arrived at civilization, suddenly fired by a spontaneous combustion of zeal for transforming all others on its own pattern—and of that race, a fraction which stood on the lower ranges of its evolution. For here after all were the Chinese people, old, mellowed, wise, steeped in a rich culture, with a rarefied and subtil-

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ized art, a philosophical system, an ethical code not far surpassed by those of other races if surpassed at all, a highly evolved society, a delicate code of manners, a thought out and on the whole successfully applied science of government and an art of living which has yielded on the whole as much happiness as any other. And all unconscious of this or of the possibility that this might be, there descend on them, out of lands not yet identified in history when China was already civilized and great, a small group of men and women, self-elected to "save" them, "uplift" them, lead them out of darkness. There is something awing, if melancholy, in the self-assurance of nations suddenly appointing themselves pattern of ultimate perfection. And when the nation from which most of the self-elected come is America, a nation then only on the lower rungs of the ladder of cultural development, the spectacle is mainly comic. But incongruously there are others from other nations, each equally self-convinced that it is the pattern. Had the Chinese suddenly confessed defeat and submitted themselves for refabrication they would have been inwardly torn to pieces seeking to fit the patterns. For as between the French Jesuit and the Texas Baptist, the Spanish Dominican and the Massachusetts Congregationalist, there was as vast a difference as between either of them and the Chinese. And the French Jesuit and the Texas Baptist despised each other only a little bit less than both despised the Chinese. In the meantime China was torn by both. It is all inconceivable; but it was so.

Out of the same psychology that led the missionaries

unquestioningly to teach the details of the American Revolution to Chinese children as history, they also sought to impose their own customs and certainly to tear down those of the Chinese which had to the Chinese sacred associations. In the chapter on the breakdown in government and the part of the missionaries in interfering with officials on behalf of their converts mention was made of the prohibition of ancestor worship and participation in religious and communal rites enforced on all Chinese who came under missionary influence. The significance of ancestor worship as the expression of Chinese philosophy and the symbol of its continuity has also been explained. It was the heart of Chinese belief and the foundation of the family system. A steady propaganda was conducted by the missionaries against ancestor worship, against the Chinese form of burial rites, against their rules of mourning, against so much of what symbolized their common origins and background. And the propaganda was not weakened by the fact that submission to it carried material rewards in the form of a privileged position. True, the missionaries' success in this, too, was limited, but it contributed to the total effect, which was one of speeding a descent.

One of the common jibes against missionaries in China is that the missionaries have been responsible for Chinese nationalism and the resultant rising against foreigners and foreign privilege. The jibe is especially bitter on the tongues of outport businessmen who resent the prospect of living in China as they would in their own countries, unhedged by Divine right—and on the tongues of news-

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paper correspondents for whom the truth about China is what foreign businessmen in foreign businessmen's clubs say is the truth about China. In the sense in which it is made the charge is preposterous, if only because the springs of Chinese nationalism run far deeper, as we shall see later. It is true that in so far as the missionary successfully preached Christianity, he struck at foreign domination; but only in so far as the Gospel of Jesus is inimical to aggression in the interests of Mammon, only in so far as the doctrine of the brotherhood of man is inimical to the political exploitation of one nation by another. Also it is true in so far as mission schools by teaching the Declaration of Independence and the principles of democracy which America professes disseminated dangerous ideas of independence and patriotism. It was not the revolt against imperialism that the missionaries caused. This has not been their most lasting contribution. The outstanding result of their efforts has been their contribution to disintegration. They added one force to the confluence of forces which were disrupting China, any one of which would have been serious and all of which together were fatal.

CHAPTER VIII

COLLAPSE

THE real break-up of China has now come. This is not the break-up visualized thirty years ago by the politically-minded, who thought in terms of international relations and conceived only of spheres of influence and partition by the Powers. This is something more. It is actual break-up from within—dissolution. There is chaos indeed, not as the word comes glib and hackneyed to the tongues of newspaper correspondents but in its true sense of formlessness. There could have been no other outcome. It was inescapable: the effect of causes operating for almost a hundred years. All that might have been subject to control was the time and manner of transition, whether graduated or sudden, orderly or violent. In the event it proved to be sudden and violent, compressed within a few years and catastrophic. For this failure to exercise control, to prevent what could have been prevented, there are also explanations, some of which are implicit in the conditions given and some fortuitous and unfortunate.

First, of course, was the world war. Those four years had a profound effect throughout the East as everywhere else. In China, too, they disseminated ideas, quickened thinking, led to national self-appraisal, released destructive ideas, unsettled fixities, brought suppressed disorders to the surface, accentuated existing tendencies and

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foreshortened all processes. Countries which began on a solid footing could find their equilibrium again—perhaps too soon and too easily; even the word reconstruction had a speedy and ignominious death when it was discovered that there could be no reconstruction without some destruction. But in a country like China, already unsettled, “normalcy” could not be regained so easily. There was no premium on normalcy. It had already demonstrated its failings and lost its sanctity. It would have been irrecoverable had there been no war; the war’s influences speeded its passing and made a plunging descent out of what might have been an orderly decline.

Those were years of disillusionment for China. The bright promise of the revolution of 1911 had faded. Even reformers’ zeal could not blink realities. The republic was a disappointment; it had failed to redeem the promise of rebirth. To say that it had changed only names, as so often is said, is not wholly true, for it had knocked one of the props from under the old order. It, too, had quickened thinking. Destructively it was successful; constructively it was negative. Disappointment was as sharp as the enthusiasm had been high. A psychology of despair resulted, intensified by events. Yuan Shih-k’ai had emasculated all pretense of republican forms, had made himself dictator, tried to become emperor, failed, died and left behind him a swarm of military adventurers who tried to elevate themselves to his height without his stature. They were already resorting to private civil wars to further their personal ambitions.

The war years also saw a new onslaught on China’s in-

dependence. The preoccupation of the Western world was interpreted by Japan as heaven-sent opportunity. The Japanese military caste, having been successful in winning security for Japan, followed all nationalistic precedents by taking to the heady wine of "manifest destiny." Military castes and their diplomatic co-workers have only one interpretation of destiny: conquest of another and weaker nation. Manifestly Japan's field for conquest is China. And within a few months of the beginning of the world war it set out to realize destiny. In 1915 there were the notorious Twenty-one Demands, which baldly sought to convert China into a protectorate. Partly because of Chinese resistance and partly by reason of world protest the demands were moderated and all that Japan obtained in effect was juridical consolidation of its occupation of South Manchuria. The Japanese military party then sought by extra-legal methods to achieve the same end. One method was bribery through loans and the other was financing one Chinese party, helping it to obtain control of the government and through it securing a mortgage on China's resources. And these methods were fairly successful and by 1919 China seemed on the way to becoming another Korea. It was a cynical, ruthless, brutal procedure, but no more so than what had been attempted a generation before by the Western Powers which now were in such a state of moral indignation at the spectacle of advantage being taken of China's weakness. Nevertheless it had a disastrous effect in China from the point of view of stability, because it edged the psychology of despair with hysteria. Also it spurred the nationalism

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which later was to pile up a wave which would sweep everything with it.

Akin to the intermeddling of Japan was the effect of the cynicism of the proceedings at Versailles in 1919. When Japan had entered the war in 1914 and occupied the Kiaochow Peninsula, which was a German leasehold, formal pledges were given that the territory would be returned to China after the war. Then China was persuaded to join on the Allied side, its intellectual leaders doing so in the belief that in the establishment of a new international order which would crown the defeat of Germany it would profit China to be represented: they had taken cognizance of Mr. Wilson's speeches and the Allied governments' profession of war aims. Then when the peace conference met it was revealed that just exactly at the time when China was being pressed to join the Allies the Allies were concluding secret treaties giving the Kiaochow Peninsula to Japan—that is, the territory of one Ally, in return for its becoming an Ally, was being given to another Ally and without the despoiled Ally's consent. When the decision became known in China it ignited a flame. There were demonstrations, strikes, mob outbursts. Through all the politically conscious classes there ran a wave of bitterness. Then the Student Movement was born, an organization for the fostering of national patriotism. Then, too, a number of personal attacks were made on cabinet ministers who were serving as tools of Japan. Thus the fire of nationalism was fanned.

The upheaval of the time gave impetus also to a movement which has erroneously been too often classified as

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cause rather than effect. This is what is known as the Chinese Renaissance, although the description is both too broad and ill-fitting. The tendency to translate Eastern phenomena into Western terminology, using words that connote something entirely different because they are of another social language, leads to a great deal of misconception about the East. The temptation to use journalistic labels is seldom resisted. The Chinese Renaissance was not quite a renaissance and was never of the cosmic importance that its foreign admirers attached to it because it was something concrete, obvious and easily recognizable; but it did touch fundamentals and it added to the destructive criticism and the rejection of values which made collapse come easier when all the props loosened. Essentially the Renaissance was a movement for the dispossession of the classical language and the substitution of the vulgate as the medium of literature. In that respect it is comparable to the analogous movement against Latin in Europe. But this carried with it an attack against all the sanctities of the old order and the conservative classes, not only those who rally around the things that are because they always have been but those who, while acknowledging the necessity of modernization, held to the literary language as the quintessence of everything historically Chinese. In the latter argument there was considerable force, for the literary language was the vehicle of the Confucian canons, as well as other literature and historical and philosophical writing, and these were the materials of Chinese education, and Chinese education was the medium of the transmission of the Chinese

spirit. There followed a period of acrid controversy between the protagonists of the Renaissance, a brilliant group of iconoclastic younger men, and those who were fighting to preserve something out of the wreck. In any controversy, especially one involving the sanctities, names are called, feelings rise out of all proportion to the intrinsic merits of the dispute and much more is wrecked than either side originally desired. In this controversy questions of fundamentals were inevitably raised, because fundamentals were indirectly involved. The rebels took up the challenge and responded that Chinese philosophical theories had outlived their applicability; Chinese education was sterile; the family was an institution for the constriction of personality and the organization of production was such that Chinese lived as beasts of burden. And because this case and those who espoused it were associated also with the new patriotism, the beginnings of nationalism and the clamor for a free, unfettered and stronger China, the growing generation rallied to its support. The middle schools and universities were spotted with distinguished younger professors who propagated the new thought and the most intellectually alive part of the generation was growing up in an atmosphere of questioning, skepticism, irreverence and unimpeded examination of all values. And the young being impatient, when the opportunity came to push over they pushed.

It was the complete wiping out of all vestiges of government, both monarchical and republican, that did most to precipitate disaster. One by one the last of the lieutenants of Yuan Shih-k'ai passed from the scene by death,

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old age or defeat in intrigue. Not much was to be said for them, but they had at least been bred in the old school, and to both their predacity and egoism their training had given some restraints. They were not utterly irresponsible, not wholly ignorant and not completely destitute of scruple. No country facing the prodigious task which lay before China if it was to save itself could have been guided by such men, but on the other hand they did have some sense of public responsibility and some consciousness of the existence of the Chinese people. And they were succeeded by an up-start rabble—exception being made for a very few. These were generals without either new or old education, who had risen at a time when there was no administrative machinery above them to give them pause and when one could follow one's voracious impulses with impunity. They enlisted their own armies without the authorization of superiors, levied taxes as they pleased and without conscience, gleaned the districts in which they were stationed like a plague of locusts and conducted themselves generally as satraps. And when they deemed their armies to be strong enough they launched themselves against their rivals. The history of the years from 1918 to 1927 can be stated in terms of the last sentence. It is both needless and useless to review the civil wars which came at increasingly shorter intervals and on an ever wider scale and with always greater devastation; the lesson which China has taken to heart from the West with greatest success is that of killing large numbers of men. It is the only aspect of Western efficiency which China has adapted successfully to its own

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use. To go into any detail as to these wars and the combatants and the results is to no purpose. They were meaningless except to the victims, who were many. Essentially they were wars of elimination between rival generals and their most regrettable aspect is that they did not result in the elimination of enough.

There were other results, however. The country was being bled. Also the last remnants of government disappeared. Peking, the capital, became a bureaucratic and diplomatic fiction. The pretense of unification could not be taken seriously. Political authority ceased, and the controlling hand which government might have raised was palsied and withered off. If there was no immediate relapse into anarchy—and there was not—it was only because respect for public order is ingrained in the Chinese and they are inherently law-abiding, perhaps because they are not dependent on law to restrict conduct but are guided by traditions under the authority of the family. China as an entity, however, was lapsing into a number of semi-feudal principalities overrun by mercenary bands officially called armies and often shading off into brigand gangs. It was ceasing to be a political entity, in other words.

Thus it was until a new and decisive element entered in 1926. This was the reëmergence in another form of the revolutionary party which had brought about the republic. In 1913 this party, already then under the name of the Kuomintang or Nationalist Party, made a last hopeless stand against Yuan Shih-k'ai and his dictatorial ambitions. There was a short war, the rebels were routed and forced

to take refuge in the foreign concessions or Japan and the Kuomintang appeared to have passed into oblivion. But it had not. It could not, for it represented too much of the feeling of the inarticulate and bore the hopes of too many of the rising generation who were looking toward a different kind of future. With the overthrow of Yuan Shih-k'ai the Kuomintang leaders returned, but in 1917 again were driven from Peking and returned to their stronghold in Canton, the province from which most of the leaders hailed and which has been the birthplace of revolutionary sentiment, partly because the Cantonese are Southern, more mercurial and more progressive and partly because Canton has been the longest in contact with the outer world and the most open to new ideas. In Canton there gathered the rump of the original parliament which had been convoked and prorogued more than once since 1913, a number of revolutionaries who dated from the earliest days of the anti-Manchu movement and their leader, Dr. Sun Yat-sen, one of the strangest figures of modern times, one of the most enigmatic and one of the most important. Whatever may be said about him, and uncountable words have been written and spoken, and however history may rate him, it will not be denied that he has left his mark on time. He may have been only the instrument of his age, as all great men have been, and he may have been lacking in many of the qualities of greatness; but, whether for good or ill, he has turned the course of Chinese history as few other men of his race.

Sun Yat-sen was born in 1866 in a small village near Canton, the son of a Christianized peasant, and came early

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and naturally within the radius of Western influence. There is some symbolical significance in the fact that he was the first Chinese graduate of a British medical college in Hongkong. He began the practice of medicine in Macao, the Portuguese colony, but the call of his temperament was urgent and he was soon launched on the career of revolutionary which was his until he died. He has already been quoted, from his memoirs, to the effect that China's ignominious defeat by Japan turned his thoughts to the necessity of sweeping out the Manchus. He joined a group of secret agitators and with the impatience that always characterized him planned an immediate coup. Without any calculation of practical possibilities an attempt was made to capture the city of Canton. It was, of course, a fiasco and those of the leaders who were not captured and executed fled the country, among them Dr. Sun.

Then began fifteen years of the color and incredibility of a moving picture thriller. He went back and forth across the world, seeking out Chinese colonies everywhere, preaching, agitating, organizing and raising funds. Hunted, tracked by spies and with a price on his head, he was always in the shadow of death by torture. In 1896 he was kidnaped in London and secretly imprisoned in the Chinese Legation. A ship was at the docks waiting to take him back to China. Through a servant he managed to smuggle a note to Dr. James Cantlie, his former teacher, who began a public agitation to compel his release. The matter being pressed by the British government, the Legation was compelled to free him. On other occasions he

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was equally near capture and execution while secretly in China, but he pressed on fearlessly, and everywhere he left nuclei of revolution which events in China expanded. In Japan, where there was a large Chinese student body sympathetic to revolutionary ideas, he succeeded in organizing a party of considerable proportions. The Boxer rebellion and its aftermath added to the number of his supporters and the visible weakening of the monarchical government added to their daring. Then in 1911 came the incident in Wuchang which precipitated the revolution, and Dr. Sun, who was in London at the time, returned at once to China and was made Provisional President.

His incumbency was short-lived. As already told, Yuan Shih-k'ai held the balance of power and Dr. Sun had to sacrifice himself to save the republic. But he remained titular and substantive head of the Kuomintang party. He remained its driving force and inspiration, for thousands of China's highest-minded men the embodiment of China's hope and ideals. And he took the Kuomintang party into all its subsequent adventures, some gallant, some bizarre and some farcical. Mainly he led it into declarations of independence, proclamations of provisional governments and recurrent insurrections. He had been a revolutionary for fifteen years, the larger part of his adult life, and he did not and could not cease being one after his avowed object had been realized. The technique and habit had become ingrained. He saw quite rightly that the republic was not a republic; but he did not see that the reason lay deeper than the individuals against whom he declared revolts and that something more was

involved than the verbal forms of constitutions and the political forms of cabinets and parliaments. The prerequisites of true republican government were lacking. There was not a politically-minded population, not even a population which was conscious of the meaning of politics, as politics must be taken in representative government. There was no widespread political training or experience, no sense of civic responsibility, no understanding of the implications of republican government. And these prerequisites could not be attained by successive revolutions, even if the revolutions were successful. To the contrary, revolutions declared on any provocation only set dangerous precedents which could be taken advantage of not only by those whose motives were beyond suspicion. A long period of education, organization and constructive building had been necessary before the old régime could be unseated, and that was only the negative aspect of the revolution; a much longer one was necessary before the more difficult enterprise of securely establishing a new régime could be consummated. But the impatience which impelled him to attempt a coup in 1895 with a handful of peasants against a disciplined garrison characterized him to the end. He could not wait.

From 1913 to 1926 there were successive fiascos, each tending to make the progressive cause more ridiculous. And Dr. Sun became ever more desperate, grasping wildly at every promise of help from whatever source. To combat the corrupt militarism which held the Peking government in its grip he made alliances with the most predatory military adventurers, duped by their promises

of support for his aims. He sought help from first one country and then another, forgetting that when foreign Powers intervened they did so with a motive, and the motive boded China no good. Interference in China's affairs had helped bring China to the pass in which it was. He surrounded himself with sycophants and parasites, men who erected a wall of flattery around him to screen out the truth. He would arrive at Canton, proclaim a provisional government as the only legal government of China although he had only a precarious hold on the one city, demand that the foreign Powers recognize his government as the government of China and cease dealing with Peking; and flamboyantly announce that he was about to lead an expedition to capture Peking. Two months later he would be evicted from Canton and have to take refuge in British Hongkong, a few hours away. Then another turn of the political wheel, and he would be back in Canton, and again there would be proclamations, demands, announcements. It was *opéra bouffe*, but in the meantime Canton was being impoverished by one military occupation after another.

The more balanced of Dr. Sun's supporters appealed to him to abandon his grandiose dreams, consolidate himself where he was, apply his program of reconstruction and good government and gradually extend his sway by the example of efficient and beneficent government in contrast to the hectic conditions elsewhere in the country. But he turned a deaf ear. China could not wait, he said, it must be saved at once; he forgot that it would have to wait in any case and there could be no spontaneous salva-

tion. To the solid arguments drawn from reality he could oppose rebuttal drawn from the blandishments of his courtiers, who fished in the waters he muddied. Meanwhile he retained the confidence of large masses, was maintained by their voluntary contributions and remained for them a symbol which held their imagination. For years hard-working merchants and laborers in distant corners of the world as well as around Canton taxed themselves to support his efforts. To the day of his death there was something almost mystical in his appeal to millions of Chinese. Out of this grew his real strength—his original success in organizing the revolution and his final success in destroying all that was left of the old government and substituting for it the Nationalist government.

Both prodigious successes and calamitous failures can be attributed to the inexplicable contradictions in the man's character. He was part early-Christian prophet, part Napoleon, part Central American insurrecto. He was egoistic, inordinately vain, endowed beyond other men with the capacity to believe what was pleasant to believe, naïve, mentally unstable and inclined to leap from philosophy to philosophy and one program to another which was wholly irreconcilable, and toward the end of his life given to delusions of grandeur. In twenty years his beliefs went the whole range from unsophisticated American constitutionalism to capitalistic industrialism and then a faintly communistic socialism, and sometimes embraced all three. In the *San Min Chu I*, or *Three Principles of the People*, a book which was artificially elevated to the status of Bible between 1926 and 1929 and then died

away even while lip-service was being rendered, there is a combination of sound social analysis, keen comment on comparative political science, and bombast, journalistic inaccuracy, jejune philosophizing and sophomoric economics. On the other hand, the man had a touching humility; he did suffer little men to come unto him and he listened to them sympathetically. He was studious and continued to develop intellectually to the end. He had a personal magnetism and a power of inspiration which would have made him a leader of any race and in any hemisphere. There were men of discernment who could not resist him even when convinced that he was wrong and who followed him blindly and willingly. For above all there were his sincerity, his integrity, his sweep of imagination and a dedication to the interests of his people which lifted him above the plane of ordinary men. His ambition and egoism and struggle for power were not vaingloriousness or desire for self-aggrandizement. He sought power as an instrument to save his country and make its people prosperous and happy. He was moved by patriotism in the purest, finest sense. And if his dreams were preposterous by the standards of reality and practicability, it should be remembered that he had made some of them come true. He had precedent for believing that any of them were realizable. Finally, out of his very patriotism there was born a desperation which impelled him to clutch at any hope and cling to it till frayed and to engage himself in wild enterprises. One such was his last and most decisive, the one which has set China in the path it has been following since 1927.

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This was the Russian adventure of 1923-1928. For years Dr. Sun had been appealing to some of the Powers, especially Great Britain and the United States, to come to his support. What he desired was their backing against his political opponents in Peking and prodigious sums of money for building railways, opening harbors, exploiting mines and developing resources generally. This was conveniently forgotten when "Down with Capitalistic Imperialism" became the cry; or it may be speculated whether the failure of England and the United States to respond did not lend shrillness to the cry. At any rate and fortunately for China, the two Powers turned a deaf ear, and later Dr. Sun used their refusal as justification for going elsewhere. It was a strange dialectic perversion, being based on the assumption that he was being betrayed by those who owed him an obligation and that failure to recognize as the government of China wherever he happened momentarily to be was an unlawful blow at China. Elsewhere could mean only Japan and Soviet Russia. The Japanese are realistic and know their China politics and would give no aid except for payment in advance on the only terms which the Japanese military caste would recognize, and for this Dr. Sun distrusted Japan too much. As for Soviet Russia, it stood ready and willing; in fact, it came proffering aid.

Soviet Russia had begun to turn its eyes eastward as soon as the pressure of Allied intervention lifted in the West. For one thing, the illusory confidence in immediate social revolution in Western Europe could no longer be cherished. The East seemed a fairer field, for there all

kinds of ferments were working simultaneously. Also, having realpolitik in view, as the Russians always have had, the West was most vulnerable in the East, where its distant imperial possessions lay. And the affront which Europe had just given China at the Versailles conference and the nationalism which was stirring the upper intellectual layer of the Chinese mass pointed to China as the land of brightest promise. As a first step Russia formally offered to cancel the treaties concluded between the Tsarist government and China and return the imperialistic spoils of the Tsarist government. It did proceed to make good on the offer, though with reservations. Extra-territoriality was renounced and the Russian concessions in Tientsin and Hankow returned to Chinese sovereignty. But Russia's main imperialistic stake in the Far East, which is the Chinese Eastern Railway across North Manchuria, was not retroceded. An agreement was drawn up in 1924 in which China was given an active joint share in the railway's management, but the balance of power remained in Russian hands. Also, Soviet Russia took substantial possession of Outer Mongolia, which is to this day more clearly a Russian protectorate than Egypt is British. The Russians with a great show of generosity gave back only what mattered least to them, but nevertheless it was the first time that a strong Power had ever given back anything, and it made an impression on the Chinese.

In 1923 M. Joffe, the Russian ambassador in the Far East, met Sun Yat-sen in Shanghai. Dr. Sun was at the moment in one of his intervals of expulsion from Canton. He was ripe for persuasion from any source and M. Joffe's

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offers of renunciation of imperialistic spoils, the libertarian tenor of his speech and his exposition of Soviet Russia's aims struck a responsive chord. Given Dr. Sun's psychology, his inclination to grasp at any straw and his susceptibility to words of sweet agreement, a rapport between the two followed almost automatically. They issued a statement recording their mutual understanding. It specified that communism and sovietism were not suitable to China; that Russia harbored no designs on Outer Mongolia although it would not evacuate for the present; that Russia would renounce the former imperialistic treaties although its interests in the Chinese Eastern Railway would be safeguarded. But more important than what was formally stipulated was the tacit understanding, and this soon bore fruit. Later in the same year there arrived in Canton M. Borodin as adviser to Dr. Sun; there had been another turn of the political wheel and Dr. Sun was back again in Canton, again heading a government. For almost five years M. Borodin was to play a part in Chinese affairs second only to Dr. Sun, and sometimes in effect not second to Dr. Sun. And he did not long remain alone, for there soon came Russian military advisers to organize a military academy for the training of officers of an effective revolutionary army. Nor was advice the only military assistance from Moscow. While there has been monstrous exaggeration of the extent to which Moscow underwrote the cost of subsequent events, there is no doubt that considerable quantities of arms and ammunition were sent.

What the Russians really did was coördinate, integrate

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and energize the Kuomintang and the nationalist movement. They found a discordant, inchoate and loosely organized party; it was a community of belief rather than a party, and it lacked effective striking power and specific program. It had broad principles rather than concrete purposes. And for the spread of its principles and its influence it had relied always on personality and the intrinsic merits of its ideals—even if in political method it had been forced to follow the periodic-cyclonic tactics dictated by Dr. Sun's temperament. The Russians gave the Kuomintang a dynamic, its greatest need in the mood of depression, disillusionment and apathy into which the successive operations of Dr. Sun had plunged it. In the first place, they showed the party how to organize, and the Kuomintang became a model of the Russian communist party, with its pyramidal structure, its national congress, central executive committee, central political council, etc., an exact and rigid organization unsuited to the Chinese temperament and still cluttering up the government at Nanking and diffusing its energies in an infinitude of committees. But as in Moscow, the organization was such that there was every semblance of democratic control by the members and a reality of domination by a small group in the central executive committee. In the second place, the Russians gave the Chinese a technique of propaganda, and this had astonishing results. In the third place, they gave the party a sense of discipline which it had always lacked and which passed when the Russians passed in 1927. In the fourth place, they gave the Chinese hope and enthusiasm. Finally, the pervasive and deeply felt nationalism

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which had been stirring vaguely in politically sentient China was gathered up, brought to the surface and beaten into a program—unhappily for those Powers that had acquired imperialistic privileges. “Down with Imperialism” was an infectious rallying cry. It not only whipped the nation into supporting the Kuomintang but the Powers into relinquishing the prizes of imperialism. But to say that nationalism was the product of Russian communism, as most foreign businessmen in China and their spokesmen did say with passion, was absurd. Nationalism was the product of history.

The Russians had disavowed any intention of seeking to communize China, but they were also conducting communist propaganda as well as showing the Kuomintang how to propagandize. The mood of China at the time made it a fertile field for a party with the radiant promises of the communists, for not only Dr. Sun was moved by a psychology of despair. Particularly was it sought to extend the communist membership within the Kuomintang. To this end it was necessary to induce the party organization to admit communists as members. After a sharp controversy this was conceded, chiefly through the ratification of Dr. Sun but against the warnings of a minority group that the decision would be rued, as it later was. From that point the Kuomintang grew in strength but it was also sprouting the seeds of its own destruction. The communists had agreed to abide by party discipline, but they were a compact, homogeneous minority who knew what they wanted and had a method of working to attain their ends; the majority had no cohesion. As always in

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such a situation, the influence of the minority was disproportionately large. Before the alliance was dissolved by the expulsion of the Russian advisers from the country and the Chinese communists from the Kuomintang, the majority was tending to become an appendage of the minority. The newly won unity of the party was short-lived. The communists, while binding the party together, were at the same time a source of schism. Many of the men who had been in the revolutionary ranks from the days when it meant death to be caught and had devoted their lives to the cause objected to seeing the party and its purpose captured by aliens. Many objected to communist principles as such. And many feared that success for the revolution at the price of communist leadership would mean that it was a Russian revolution, not a Chinese, and that China would have exchanged many masters for one. On the one hand were the communists, inserting themselves as the elephant in the tent, trunk first; on the other hand were those who resented Russian and communist encroachments and insisted on keeping the direction of the movement in Chinese hands. There were coups and counter-coups, into the details of which it is needless to go, except that they resulted in steadily increasing strength for the communists. Then a new turn was given to the situation by the death of Sun Yat-sen.

With the death of Dr. Sun the most formidable obstruction to the communists was removed. So long as he was alive final decision rested with him. The left wing of the party, which was not communist but advocated coöperation with the communists, would abide by his ruling.

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With Dr. Sun dead, the left wing and the communists were in the ascendancy. Almost imperceptibly Borodin insinuated himself into the position of initiator and final arbiter. This was not sinister communist design. It was as much because he was a man of force, resourcefulness and initiative, and there is no reason to believe that he was not sincerely working for what he conceived to be the best interests of China; there is even considerable reason to believe that he was. But the fact was that the initiative was slowly passing from the members of the Kuomintang who were not complaisant to the Russians and the communists. Then emerged another figure. This was Chiang Kai-shek, he who since 1928 has been the head of the Nanking government, though not without periodic challenge. Chiang was the principal of the military academy in Canton and had been in Moscow, but he was not complaisant to Russian ascendancy. He took definite measures to curb the communists, and an agreement was reached whereby they bound themselves not to exceed the rights of ordinary members of the Kuomintang; but meanwhile sharp fissures had been opened in the party and many of its leaders had been exiled and many had left. Before the agreement could be tested questions of policy were subordinated to action.

Under the leadership of General Chiang Kai-shek the revolutionary army, now hammered into an efficient fighting force, started northward in July, 1926. In an electrifying campaign which swept all before it the expedition reached the Yangtze River and in three months had captured Hankow and Wuchang, on opposite sides of the

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river. With possession of those two cities, industrial centers next only to Shanghai, the Nationalists were in command of Central China. In March, 1927, Shanghai fell and the Nationalists held the more populous, richer and strategically important part of the country. The conquest of Peking and the North seemed imminent, but by then the fissure in the Kuomintang had become a chasm and it could not be bridged.

The military successes of the Nationalist armies were not attained by fighting alone. Propaganda prepared the way for their advance. They were moving through friendly country, though occupied by hostile forces. Two years of intensive propaganda had galvanized the country. By posters, leaflets, traveling speakers, organizers, processions and demonstrations the country had been aroused. Now for the first time not only the articulate and student classes were being worked up but the masses. Nationalistic propaganda struck fire first. The long submerged resentment at foreign aggression came to the surface, the more explosively for being repressed. The appeal of national patriotism is always infectious, and it was not impaired in this case by the fact that the anti-foreign, anti-imperialistic propaganda was not altogether intellectually honest. It was just propaganda, in other words. More than nationalism had been aroused, however. Social discontent had also been played on, and it offered ample scope for propaganda. Specifically, peasant unions had sprung up in rural regions and labor unions in the city. Quite literally, they had sprung up, and much too fast to be genuine. Members had been enrolled en masse, often by

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specious pleas and promises incapable of fulfillment. But whatever their origin, the workers' and peasants' associations became a force to be reckoned with, in some regions of the South a force which threatened to dominate. They were emboldened by the Nationalist victories, which they quite logically took as their enfranchisement; and as they became emboldened, so did the communist and left wing leaders, who could count on their support.

What had been a division on principle now became a concrete political issue. Was the Nationalist government, which now held half of China, to be a wing of the Communist International or was it to be Chinese, subject to Chinese judgment and desires? The question could not be evaded. This does not mean that the communists were in a majority or were even attaining a large proportion, relative to the mass. There were a few intellectuals who were consciously and understandingly communist. There were many who were consciously communist though not understandingly. They had taken the doctrine whole, more because of its associations than for its merits as doctrine. These included the young, especially students. There were still more who were neither consciously nor understandingly communist, who did not even dimly comprehend what this Kung Chan Tang signified, but who felt, because they had been told, that it was something that promised them a fulfillment of their desires and an appeasement of the rigor of their lives. And of those on whom the communists could count, these were a majority. But they were enough to threaten to give the communists a balance of power.

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They were enough also to kindle a flame in the wake of the Nationalist advance. In the cities strikes became epidemic. In Hankow, after the Nationalists had taken over the city, strikes and retaliatory lockouts paralyzed economic life, and the more aggressive of the labor unions began to demand and exercise political powers. The Nationalist government found itself embarrassed. Its efficiency was being impaired, for it could not function in a state of volcanic upheaval. In the country conditions were worse, for the peasants began to interpret literally the promises on which they had joined the movement. For this was to follow the Nationalists' success; the Nationalists had succeeded; now there was to be consummation. They refused to pay rent on their land, which was, it is true, at a usurious rate more often than not. Land-hungry, like most peasants, they began to seize land. They confiscated stores of grain. They became a mob, eking out vengeance where they had borne grudges. In certain parts of Hunan Province, in particular, mob rule for a time reached the proportions of a terror. Repressive measures had to be taken by the Nationalist officials themselves, lest the situation become entirely uncontrollable. And those in the Nationalist régime who had hitherto been benevolently neutral toward the communists or who believed in any case that coöperation with them was a means to the end all Chinese desired, now were given cause. Many of them joined those who had been distrustful of the consequences of the communist adventure from the beginning. There was a growing feeling that if the revolution was to be saved at all and calamity averted, a halt

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had to be called. Now there was no longer possibility of compromise.

The leadership of this faction was taken by Chiang Kai-shek, who had turned against the communists even before the army left Canton. His motives were undoubtedly mixed, for he also had ambitions of personal mastery. He formally broke with the communists and established another government, to which the moderates immediately adhered. Both Nanking and Hankow then claimed to be the seat of Nationalism and the inheritor of Dr. Sun's policy. Meanwhile in the area under the control of Chiang Kai-shek, repressive measures were being taken against communists and their sympathizers in the form of wholesale slaughter. For practical purposes the peasants' and workers' unions were crushed. It was a situation that could not endure and would have eventuated in fighting between Nanking and Hankow had it not been resolved by the precipitation of the crisis in Hankow. In the summer of 1927 the communists made a bid for power. The circumstances have always been in dispute, but it is clear that the Chinese communists had received orders from Hankow to demand the reorganization of the Kuomintang in such a way as to give them substantive power. The old leaders were to be removed and to be replaced by peasants and laborers and a peasants' and workers' army was to be formed. No documentary evidence has ever been produced, but the writer has been told by a minister of the Hankow government that such orders were sent in a telegram from Moscow and that he had seen the telegram and had participated in the Central Ex-

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ecutive Committee's debates on the demands. It is true that the telegram was never revealed by M. Borodin but by a Hindu named Roy who had been in Hankow as the representative of the Communist International. At any rate the demands were refused, for they involved a surrender of the Kuomintang, of the revolution and of Nationalist China to alien control. Borodin and the other Russians were forced to leave China, together with a few dissenting Chinese who accompanied them to Moscow. Then followed a "purgation" of communists in Hankow similar to those which had been taking place in the area under Nanking's control. Purification was by execution, and for nearly two years death was being meted out as a matter of casual routine. The Hankow government voluntarily liquidated and its leaders went to Nanking. At the end of the same year a communist coup was attempted at Canton, with two days of depredations by both communists and anti-communists, and in retaliation the Nationalist government severed all relations with Soviet Russia and deported all consular and other official representatives. And the slaughter of communists and pseudo-communists and many who were just mistaken for communists went on.

Thus ended a bizarre international episode, as it had to end and in the way that was foredoomed. It was incongruous in its origin and unhealthy in its development. The two parties to the alliance had different ends and never reached an understanding on what they had in common. Nor was either party wholly sincere. Each was making use of the other and each had mental reservations.

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The Chinese desired to make use of the Russians to rid themselves of other Powers: playing one strong nation off against another has been their strategy always. Only by that strategy has China been able to survive. Also the Kuomintang desired the help of the Russians against its internal enemies. In so far as the Chinese were sincere they were naïve. To believe, in the light of contemporary history and China's own international experience, that it could obtain material assistance from another Power without incurring an obligation that would have to be redeemed was reckless folly or stupidity. A realistic Chinese can believe in only one rule of action for his country, a rule that must be followed unrelentingly: any external interference in China's internal affairs is costly to China and may be fatal, and must be resisted. Instead, while striking off the shackles of imperialism, the Chinese were inviting the most dangerous aspect of imperialism, which is the interference of one Power in the affairs of another country for its own ends, whether those ends be political or economic. As for Soviet Russia, there is nothing to be gained now in seeking to analyze its motives. Even assuming that its motives were self-aggrandizement, that it sought to draw China into the area of world revolution as a communist state and make of China a weapon in Russia's own struggle with Great Britain, even so there was little ground for the righteous indignation aired in Europe and the United States. At the worst Russia was only attempting what practically every great Power had been striving for since the middle of the nineteenth century. If the attempt was immoral and inimical to the

peace of the world, it was at least in orthodox international tradition.

What is more pertinent is that the alliance was doomed to failure—or else to end in China's servitude. It was certain, then, that the Chinese would break it if they still had freedom of choice. They could do no other if they wished to preserve freedom of any kind. Even if the Chinese had desired a communist society and a soviet state, which they avowedly did not, to have attained them directly under the ægis of Russia—under conditions such as existed in 1927—would have been to submit the destiny of China and the lives of its 400,000,000 people to the caprices and rigid ideologies of a small group of men in Moscow ignorant of Chinese traditions, temperament and social background and all too inclined to bend the knowledge they had to fit stratified preconceptions. And just at that time the Chinese were in no mood to make any such surrender. On this ground primarily and not out of reaction or "bourgeois" greed the Chinese broke with Soviet Russia. They had to do so in order to save China.

The Nanking régime established after unification with Hankow did, it is true, scuttle most of the plans for social reform which had been projected, including much that was desirable. This was one of the most serious consequences of the Russian fiasco. Since the world war had stirred up ideas there had been a good deal of social criticism in the air in China. The best elements in the younger generation were examining the bases of Chinese society. They were particularly alert to the dangers which lay ahead if China was to industrialize, for they knew some-

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thing of conditions in the West. They could see nearby in Japan that unrestricted development of resources and the institution of a factory system on the principle of *laissez faire* only resulted in the substitution of one serfdom for another. There was, therefore, much healthy constructive thinking with a view to prevention while there was time for prevention and before a vested interest in opposition had grown up. The tide of propaganda between 1924 and 1927 swept all this away. More, it established a vested interest in opposition. In the minds of those who were sympathetic and tolerant it bred both hostility and fear. It associated all efforts for an equitable organization of society with expropriation by mob rule, as in Hunan and Hankow. It threw into disrepute all efforts to avoid the mistakes of the West, mistakes which the West could not avoid because at the beginning of the machine age it could not foresee what was involved. Now there is really reaction in China, reaction in both connotations: a swing to the other extreme and blind, obscurantic conservatism out of material self-interest. This may be the biggest price paid for the Russian adventure.

Another consequence was the blow to morale. The Chinese owed much to Russian help. It contributed materially to the success of nationalism, both in compelling the foreigners to yield up some of their privileges and in advancing the revolution beyond any point reached since 1911. And this had raised hope again, hope that China might yet find its feet, at least that China was at last out of the slough. It had an inspiring effect. The cynicism of mandarin politics was replaced by a disinter-

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ested desire to serve the common good. Men in the government worked with enthusiasm. There was generally among the intellectually conscious classes an up-lifting of the spirit and a fine hot glow of zeal. China was revived. With the reaction that followed the schism in the Kuomintang, the renewal of intrigueries and the suppression of those who had been in the forefront of the advance, all this died away. A new depression succeeded, a despondency founded on yet deeper disillusionment than China had known before, since hope had not before run so high or had so wide a range in the population. Psychologically China had been laid low just when it most needed energy and confidence and steadying. And much of its best human material had been killed off. The young students, the boys and girls who responded to the idealism engendered by the communist propaganda, were of the kind most needed by a race somewhat jaded at a time when it must face a new world and make its place anew. The fact that they were susceptible to the appeal of sacrifice for a new order and flung themselves completely for the cause was evidence that they were of the stuff that China needed. It was they who were killed, not the opportunists, the time-servers and the placemen.

Finally, the Russian alliance eliminated the last chance of a transition kept under control. Even with the acceleration of all tendencies by the war, there was still in, say 1920, a balanced, sober-minded feeling for a clean sweep and a fresh start, for regeneration by rational progression. In fact, then for the first time had there appeared the quality of tough-mindedness, a capacity for examin-

ing slogans and nostrums for their intrinsic content. It was a nucleus of genuine revolution rather than the easy reaching out for labels, as in 1911 and before. Had this spirit been given time to work in slowly and the nucleus slowly take accretions on to itself, it is possible that a new foundation might yet have been laid before the old had been ground away. It was not probable, but possible. The results of the Russian alliance, of the cyclonic disturbances that followed on the propaganda organized by the Russians, eliminated even the possibility. The propaganda, not wholly by the intention of its authors, struck at everything—at family, at respect for age, respect for ancestors, discipline, morality, religion, customs, everything. Precisely because it got out of hand, as propaganda often does, it destroyed more and more quickly than was expected or even intended. Much needs to be destroyed in China, of course; much that ought not to be lost must be lost if it is to accommodate itself to the world of the twentieth century. But changes wrought by two or three years of propaganda are inherently meretricious. Not conviction but infection and intoxication were at work in those years. The results were purely negative. Just so much was destroyed. Collapse was complete. Then began the real break-up of China.

CHAPTER IX

CHINA TODAY: VACUUM

IN fine, there is no China today. There are 400,000,000 Chinese and a political entity called China. But that for which the name has stood for 2,000 years or more, that which has been most truly China, which gave the life of its people distinctive form and color and differentiated the race from all others—that is gone. Nor is there anything in its stead. There is neither a civilization nor a society, but a flux, a turmoil and a heaving mass. When it is said that China needs unification above all, what is usually meant is that it must have a single government exerting authority over the whole country. This is doubtless true, but it is only a small part of the truth and the less important part. The unification which China must have lies much deeper. What it needs now is not only a common consent to a government but a common premise as to what kind of life it shall have. Changing the figure, it is lost now in a historical no man's land, groping for a new path among the débris of its past.

A government there most certainly is not. That which is recognized by the Powers and claims jurisdiction over all the eighteen provinces—the Nationalist government at Nanking—is a government in name only. It bears the signet of the Kuomintang and carries the inheritance of Dr. Sun Yat-sen; and the army which captured Peking

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in 1928 and ended its career as the most magnificent capital in the world was commanded from Nanking, which has since been the official capital of the country. So far as there has been any center of authority since then, it has resided in Nanking. Yet in the sense that its orders will be executed in all parts of the country and public revenues transmitted to it automatically, the two practical tests of a government, that which is established at Nanking has never been a government. Nor was it even before a succession of revolts precipitated a new series of civil wars in 1929. Paradoxically, like all else political in China, it is a *de jure* and not a *de facto* government.

At no time has Nanking had the substance of authority over more than four or five of the eighteen provinces. The rest declared their allegiance and submitted themselves to its orders. And its orders were obeyed, but obeyed only because they were first privately approved by the local military commanders to whom they were given. Thus, appointments of officials for Honan Province were made by Nanking, but the men appointed were decided upon first by Feng Yu-hsiang, who controlled that province. Nanking then merely went through the formalities of gazetting the appointments. So also for Hunan and Hupeh Provinces, controlled by another group of generals, and for the Manchurian Provinces, controlled by still another group. Each of these groups had its own army, its own tax administration and its own revenues, some of which were passed up to Nanking but only voluntarily and not as an acknowledgment of subordination. Nanking was recognized as a government in principle, as

symbol of a common denominator and for expediency. Also Nanking was accepted as representative of the country in foreign relations, for its policy of recovery of national rights from the Powers was one to which all Chinese would adhere. In other words there was still sectional independence, just as there had been before the Nationalist revolution was consummated. There was regional autonomy as there had been throughout Chinese history but with this difference, that whereas before autonomy had been with the consent of the Imperial government and under officials appointed by the court, now it was solely by the will of self-appointed military men ruling by virtue of their own armies and their own ambitions. When their several ambitions collided, after a truce of less than a year, they resorted to civil war.

During the short period of truce it appeared as if the basis of a lasting peace might be laid, if only because of the profound war-weariness of the people, who had seen their towns, villages and farm lands overrun by troops for nearly ten years. Meetings were held by the outstanding leaders, concluding with joint statements declaring their common aims, their agreement on a program and their pledge to work together. All of them accepted office in the Nanking government and for a time were all together in Nanking. A detailed plan was even drafted for the reduction of the combined armies, numbering more than 2,000,000 men, by approximately two-thirds. Then when it came to apportioning the reduction, the irrepressible mutual suspicions were aroused. Each believed the scheme was designed to weaken himself at the expense of the

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others, and all were probably right. There was a resumption of jockeying for position and intriguing, of alliances and counter-alliances, pledges and breaches of faith in the best post-republic manner. At length fighting broke out, also as usual. At bottom the cause was rival ambition, but what forced ambition to aggressive action was the attempt of the Nanking government to be what it purported to be and ought to have been to fulfill the function of a government. It sought to secure the execution of its orders, transmission of revenues and centralization of control over the armies. Since these struck directly at the power of the regional chieftains and decreed their passing, they rebelled. In justification for doing so they had the argument that centralization by Nanking was motivated not so much by the desire for efficient government as by the desire for aggrandizement of the clique in power at Nanking, notably Chiang Kai-shek. The argument was not without validity, for there is no doubt that the blandishments of dictatorship have become ever more alluring to Chiang and the warnings of Yuan Shih-k'ai's inglorious end ever dimmer. The civil wars since 1929 are as futile to analyze as those before 1919. They are even more tragic to those crushed in their path, but intrinsically they are as trivial, senseless and sordid, and meaningless. They are important only as signifying that politically China is in a void. They are shadows dancing in a void, and because the measure they tread is macabre, the fact is obscured that there is a void. Politically, therefore, China is judged as substance, and therefore misjudged. And the most common, most commonplace and most

banal misjudgment is that the void can be supplied by what is varyingly called "friendly intervention" or "benevolent intervention" or "disinterested trusteeship"—all of which are contradictions in terms and a painful reduction to bald simplicities. For it is the superlative of naïveté to believe that an intervention can create. It may exploit, it may denude, or, if only negative, it may be a stop-gap; but it cannot create.

There are civil wars. Food and supplies are commandeered. Money is obtained by ill-concealed expropriation. Taxes are clapped on at will and at a rate which amounts to graduated confiscation. An army occupies a district and at once new taxes are levied, for soldiers must be fed, if not paid. A little later taxes are collected for a year in advance, a liberal discount being given for cash. Four months later the occupying army is driven out and another enters. Forthwith it, too, collects new taxes and then a year's taxes in advance. And then yet another enters and so on. There are districts in China which have paid taxes years in advance and are still paying. Innumerable generals, with large forces or small, are thus quartered on the country and eating it out. When they are subordinates of an important leader, they are somewhat restrained. The worst are what may be called guerilla commanders who shift loyalties according to the moment's exigencies and offers. Worse than drought or flood or plague is the pestilence of armies in China now.

Akin to this and sometimes not easily distinguishable is banditry. Robber bands roam the land, destroying, looting and killing. Depredations have been committed with

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impunity in the shadow of Nanking. Tens of thousands have been torn from their homes and native places by wars or famines or insupportable poverty, and from this floating population both robber bands and armies have been recruited. Men become soldiers in order to fill their rice-bowls; they rob in order to live. Given conditions in which they could wring a livelihood out of the soil or at the bench, they would return to their normal pursuits. Such conditions do not obtain now, hence they become soldiers or bandits, and sometimes first one and then the other. Since robbery is more profitable than joining an army, the commander of which may or may not pay salaries even when he has the funds, the temptation to banditry is greater. As banditry becomes more general, conditions become still worse and still more have no choice but to become outlaws.

Of these bands many have come to be called communists, although the definition of the term would amaze them. In 1929 there was an apparent recrudescence of communism, but it had more of the appearance than the reality. There are, of course, individuals who came under the influence of communistic propaganda a few years before and had escaped the process of "purgation." Because they were hunted, they became of necessity outlaws. For the reasons just outlined they had no difficulty in organizing bodies of men and using them for their own enterprises, much after the fashion of guerilla generals or bandit leaders. Where the line is to be drawn in these enterprises between desire to advance communism and desire to get wealth and power by plunder it is difficult

to say, but for the great majority it may be hazarded that the boundary of the first is very quickly crossed. In so far as communism does survive in such men, it is that part from which they deduced by their own reasoning that despoiling the possessor is an act of loyalty to the cause. If there is any belief in the doctrine itself, it is a sadly diluted communism. Any other doctrine which offered the same possibilities would have been as quickly seized upon. The communism of 1930, even if it should succeed in capturing the country, would be something vastly different from that which sought to entrench itself in 1927. It would be so different that it would have to be very freely translated to be recognizable to Moscow. Most of what has loomed up in the Yangtze Valley in 1930 may be described as banditry or guerilla warfare. Even if these various so-called Red armies should be marshaled into some coördination and then welded into what professes to be an army in the service of communism, there will be small profit for the world revolution as conceived in the Third International. What is called communism arises out of the underlying disorder in China, although it is no less potent as an agency of destruction.

Between civil wars and banditry communications have broken down. Railways run spasmodically and subject to the movements of troops and the caprices of generals. Most of the time in the last few years railway revenues have been pocketed by whatever general happened to be entrenched along any part of a line yielding revenues. The movement of goods has been well-nigh choked either by fighting or the danger of robbery. In the last few years

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thousands of miles of new highways have been built and autobus services installed, yet transportation is more difficult than before and certainly more hazardous. In and near the ports and where foreign troops still maintain a zone of neutrality there has been considerable development of modern industry, but it is meager compared to what it might have been had there been no impediments to close off large parts of the country. To the interruption of communications must be added the destruction of capital by violence and military extortions. Not only has economic life been constricted, but also the progress of movements born in the last few years has been checked—the spread of the new literature, organization of new schools and the campaign for literacy.

It is on the deeper levels that the void is most serious. A civil war can end. One of the contending leaders can emerge triumphant or all of them compose their quarrels and make a lasting peace. Then normal conditions can be restored, as after the Taiping rebellion. But after what is happening in China now there can be no returning. There is nothing to return to. The impetus gained in the years after 1920 has not been arrested. To the contrary, it is being given conscious direction. What was begun then, more or less on impulse and without calmly reasoned intent, is now being carried out deliberately and by plan. A clean sweep is being made of all that remains of the old order. What the times began the Chinese themselves are finishing. There are no conservatives left; if there are any, they are inarticulate. There are some who still talk of preserving what is best in the heritage of the

past, but they accompany their words with acts that doom everything stemming from the past. The intellectual leadership is committed to change and to carrying it out at once. The element which normally gives balance to social movements everywhere and tends to conserve is equally committed. The opposition is negligible. In this respect the atmosphere now is to be distinguished from fifteen or twenty years ago. For almost a generation there has been a vast deal of patter about what travel writers called Young China. There has been a vast deal of maudlin verbiage centering around the word "awakening," a word never quite defined. Those who knew China well generally scoffed, and properly so. For then what aroused the acclaim of the superficial was something on the outer fringes, visible to those who never penetrated beyond the ports and the beaten paths. Away from the fringes the mass of the country went on, unknowing and indifferent. What then was most vocal and self-conscious about modernism rejected mainly the hybridism of those who had returned to China with a smattering of Western education and without any grounding in their own culture. They were either ignored or patronized by the educated classes who made opinion and held power of decision. Among the latter there may already have been resignation to the adoption of certain material aspects of Westernism, but that was all. It is these classes that now are in the vanguard for change, and now the results are to be seen not only on the periphery but in lesser degree closer to the center. Now it is a matter of reasoned conviction, though sometimes flavored with fatalism. In fact,

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it may be said that the one point of fixity in the flux of China today is the desire to break with the past. It may also be said that this is the only aim of the Chinese revolution in which any degree of success has been attained.

There is destruction as well as destructiveness, and there is something awesome in the spectacle of the most conservative race in the world, the most tenacious of its past, wilfully and unheedingly demolishing all that it has held sacred, all that it has built up for three thousand years. It is not an exaggeration to say that there have been more profound changes in China in the last fifteen years than in any previous century in its history. A new generation is growing up which holds in disrepute all that its forefathers counted as cosmically ordained and eternally valid. The moral law, in the wider sense of the word moral, has been nullified. And in a country where the mores have been so fixed, where conduct has been so rigidly prescribed, not artificially by promulgated regulations but by the common consent of the race, the result is that all controls have slipped and every discipline is loosened. A country governed by tradition in the very details of every-day living, it is now traditionless or, worse, with traditions that are emasculated and without respect, without living force.

Where disruption has been most active, that is, in and near urban centers, there is now a kind of moral anarchy. There is a rampant individualism, without the check of a cultivated sense of individual responsibility. The check by the family is lax. Probably the most far-reaching and lasting result of all that is happening in China today is the

dissolution of the family. More than increased nobility or dispersal through employment in factories and larger establishments away from home, the assertion of individualism is responsible. And individualism expresses itself, naturally, as rebellion against authority. The younger generation is striking out for itself. There is a centrifugal movement away from the communal home. Young men and their wives wish to live under their own roof-tree, if only because there is so wide a disparity between the ways of the two generations and, as everywhere else under the same circumstances, disparity breeds conflict. Immunity from parental control is more easily attained and enjoyed when not living in the horizontal household immediately under the eyes of the elders.

The practical test of the integrity of family control comes in the question of marriage: can individualism be suppressed in mating? Dictation of place of residence or career and common command of individual earnings may be accepted without abdication of self. Dictation in the choice of a mate and interference in subsequent marital relations can not be without complete surrender. This surrender young people are refusing to make. They are refusing to accept marriage "by arrangement," with mates they have never seen, chosen by the two families after protracted negotiations through middlemen. They demand the right of personal selection and are exercising it, against the opposition of parents if necessary. It has become partly an act of defiance, the spirit in the air, and partly a matter of principle. The initial act of revolt is followed by its logical sequel, the right to establish a

"small home," that is, a home like the European, founded and maintained by a newly married couple for the children that are to come and governed by themselves alone.

Not only are men exercising the right of free choice in marriage, but, more significantly, women. Women, too, are demanding the "small home," and for them the stake is bigger. What is involved for them is the right of individual expression and, more, escape from subjection. Under the old form of marriage the woman went into the home of her husband, becoming a member of his family. Thereafter obedience was rendered to the family of her husband alone; her connection with her own was severed. For her obedience was literal. Her primary status was that of daughter to her husband's mother, her position as wife secondary. She still remained a child, though in the home of her husband. Her mother-in-law's will was law, to be followed without questioning, even in matters affecting her relations with her husband. If a son was born, her position was somewhat improved, but even then the son belonged primarily to the grandmother, not the mother. It was the grandmother who had the greatest influence in molding his character, not the mother. Against this subordination of individuality younger women are rebelling. They are doing so successfully. The concrete expression of the rebellion is the independent household, and thus the break with the horizontal family and group control is made cleaner. It is tangible and factual, rather than idealogical.

The historic institution of the family is passing. With it goes the principle of order in China. That which will in

time succeed may yield as much satisfaction and work as efficiently, but in the interval there is a hiatus, in which the individual flounders for guidance and the mass drifts. The reaction from repression is, of course, a swing to the opposite extreme. China, too, has its jazz age; but there it is not a passing phase, a mood playing itself out in externals. A real transvaluation of moral values is in progress, and in the turmoil of life in any large city there is color, drama and a note of tragedy. The sudden opening of a chasm between two generations is inevitably productive of pain. The older generation may by an act of will resign itself to acceptance of new and strange ways. It may even be intellectually convinced that the new are better. But instincts do not conform by will; there is hurt. Women brought up in the strict seclusion of the East see their daughters dancing with strange men in hotel ball-rooms. Themselves trained to a rigid, almost ceremonial, decorum, they see their children loose and easy and familiar—crude, by every Chinese standard. Some make pathetic attempts at adjustment. One sees elderly women of finely cut features, sitting in too garish foreign hotel tea lounges, sipping tea they would not give their servants, their gowns semi-foreign and uncomfortably modish, their hair bobbed, their satin shoes padded out with paper to conceal the fact that the feet were once bound. They sit and watch the exotic rites of men and women scarcely known to each other moving in close embrace to the accompaniment of a cacophony, their own sons and daughters among them. They sit and watch and smile, a little diffident, a little uncertain, a little uneasy. There

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is an obvious pride at being among the advanced, the smart, the chic; but deep down there may also be a little distaste, and fear, and longing for the days when the world was familiar. There is often ground for fear, and the instincts often have specific cause for dissent. When restraints suddenly give, there is human wastage, and lives are wrecked. The cry is for freedom, and the interpretation is wide, mainly because individual freedom is outside experience and so little understood. A few years ago when the Nationalist armies were advancing and students all over the country were being whipped to wild enthusiasms, a regiment reached a county seat in the interior where there was a girls' school; it was a town not even near a railway. Two weeks later the regiment left. At the same time twenty girls disappeared, girls of middle-class families. They had simply gone off with the officers. The incident is extreme in extent, but not in kind. The transition in morals is more disastrous than the transition in government—here again morals must be taken in the broader sense.

The economic transition has similarly devitalized the guilds. Their power in trade is now limited to the definitely smaller communities or to the smaller and less important trades in the larger communities. In centers where industrialism has made appreciable inroads, the guilds are already a minor factor. They exist, but they have lost their function. So far as that function has not disappeared in the broadening scale of business it has been assumed by the chamber of commerce. As for the relations of labor and the employing class, they are being

determined as everywhere else—by the strike. The labor union has made its appearance, and while its growth has at times been forced, it has already planted its roots. They will not be torn out. Working class consciousness has come, as everywhere else with the coming of industrialism. In the economic world, too, there is confusion.

Education offers an excellent illustration of the atmosphere of the time. For some years there has been education in name only. Here there has been quite literally anarchy. The student movement and the Literary Renaissance, coming together immediately after the world war, vitalized the universities. The new life burst the seams of the educational system. The spirit of free inquiry became uncontrollable mutiny. The intellectual leavening became volcanic eruption. Patriotism became a vocation. Since it is a sign of intellectual aliveness not to accept docilely the words of a professor, it followed that if one lectured in a way of which the students disapproved or gave stiff examinations the students could go on strike. There have been incidents of student strikes forcing the resignation of a university president after academic work had been suspended for weeks. Also, since student demonstrations had succeeded in frightening a treasonable cabinet and arousing public opinion to the danger of foreign aggression, classes could be suspended whenever student leaders were in a patriotic mood. Universities, colleges and middle schools have for all practical purposes of education been paralyzed by epidemics of strikes and mass absences for parades, demonstrations or orgies of public speeches. Since 1929 there has been a slight stiffening of

discipline, but in the years before students had got so completely out of hand that serious work was impossible. An effort has since been made to lead youth away from the more tempting fields of politics and back to the business of study. So far it has been only partially successful. The collapse of the government and its absorption in civil wars has also had a paralyzing effect. Education has become a luxury. School funds are among the first to be commandeered when officials have other uses for public revenues. The pay of teachers is always in arrears, sometimes so far in arrears that institutions have had to close. When they have not actually had to close, they have at least been demoralized.

The term education must also be defined. As now applied it has no relation to what it connoted even twenty-five years ago. The substance of what China has always regarded as education has been completely discarded; it has simply been dropped. Except for a few isolated private schools in the interior far from lanes of communication, the Confucian canon is either ignored or dismissed as negligible. In Peking there was formerly a well known school maintained by officials and literati of the old régime for their sons. There the orthodox curriculum was prescribed as of time immemorial. It had always been the custom of the school trustees—elderly scholars and officials—to attend the opening exercises and participate in the traditional ceremony of bowing to the tablet of Confucius. At the opening of the school a few months after the Nationalist forces took Peking the trustees went as usual. But there was no tablet above the outer gate of the

school compound. They proceeded into the assembly hall. There the niche above the dais also was empty. They made inquiries. The two tablets were found flung into a corner of the courtyard. The gesture is symbolical and representative of the attitude of the country. In Kaifeng, in Honan Province, there was for a time a provincial school for the training of magistrates. *The San Min Chu I*, or Sun Yat-sen's *Three Principles of the Peoples*, were taught; so were the principles of the Kuomintang or Nationalist Party, with a little of modern history, geography, elementary political science, an elementary survey of contemporary social problems and the like. To Confucius, Mencius, the classical poets, historians and philosophers there was not even reference. Near Shanghai is an old Buddhist temple in which there has always been a school of a higher grade. It is still there. The curriculum does not include even passing mention of the classical literature or of anything which the parents of the pupils had learned as an American child learns spelling or the meaning of 1776. Instead there is the inevitable *San Min Chu I*, with a few elementary subjects as in a Western school. The elevation of the *San Min Chu I* to the level of canon and Revelation is a temporary phase, a prolongation of the period of intensive propaganda. Since 1927 it has been taught as the classics were taught, compulsory absorption by memorization with enough of commentary to fasten in a pupil's mind the conviction of infallibility. As pedagogical method it was bad even when the material had as much of permanence and substance as the classics, but with a book which is an unsystematized mélange of

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history, economics, sociology, political science and philosophy, some of it sound and some palpably absurd to the point of errors of elementary fact, the process is a caricature of education. But the *San Min Chu I* is already being subjected to tacit and unofficial editorial emendation and will in time undergo an unostentatious elision. It will take its place as a historical document, containing also some doctrines deserving of examination, but that is all. In time the "subjects" now being taught, haphazardly chosen from Western curricula and ever changing, will be articulated into some unified system. Meanwhile there is chaos intellectually, too.

In this intellectual baselessness lies the explanation for the feverish, hectic snatching and rejecting of first one doctrine, then another, one program and another, one philosophy and another, sometimes two or more at the same time, though mutually contradictory, and all reasonlessly, without logical consecutiveness or rational analysis. Thus may be explained why parties, groups and individuals may stand for two mutually antipathetic ideas in the same year or even at the same time. While its own world was being broken, the whole outer world was simultaneously being flung at China. Now its own has broken; it has grasped frantically at whatever came within reach from the outer world, and whatever it has grasped has slipped from its fingers; and now there is nothing. The past has gone into the mold; the present is too uncoagulated even for recognition; the form of the future can only be conjectured. And this, just now, is a momentous pause in China's history; a pause and a dividing line.

CHAPTER X

WHAT NEXT?

ONE thing is certain. China will industrialize. It will mechanize production and distribution and remodel its social organization to conform with the demands of industrialism. It can do no other now; it has already gone too far to turn back. There might have been a question once—and not so long ago—whether it would or should. Now there is only to ask whether it can and how. Abstractly the question is still arguable whether in old China there was not as large a measure of happiness, class for class, as there will be after it is industrialized, for all the poverty, disease, famines and merciless toil. The evidence of America, where mechanization has wrought its most wondrous miracles, is hardly conclusive. For all America's riches, comforts and material ease, its people cannot be called happy. Inner ease and equilibrium are yet to be produced in quantity. In things it is prodigal, in content as yet meager. All this is a matter for academic speculation. For China the question has been answered in the event. It is industrializing. It must; it also wants to. Thoughtful Chinese are convinced that without industrialism China cannot survive, and most of them are equally convinced that with it the Chinese people will have ampler lives.

There is just now a fever of what is called reconstruc-

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tion. It is a large word for what it covers, yet with all the disruption and upheaval now taking place a solid material deposit is being laid. There is an almost religious zeal for the extension of communications. There is a fury of roadbuilding, so much so that little thought is given to whether the roads built are really necessary, whether their benefits will be proportionate to cost, whether the traffic will bear the cost of maintenance and how they are to be kept repaired. Many of them are not kept repaired. They exist, which is enough. Communications have become an end in themselves, and since highways are the cheapest form of communication there are highways. Figures are unobtainable or unreliable in China, but a rough estimate quoted from tables compiled by the Chinese Government Bureau of Economic Information fixes the mileage at approximately 10,000.¹ On all of these automobile services are running fairly regularly, subject to the interference of military movements, bandits and damage to roadways by storm, and thus areas, especially in the South and West, have been opened up which heretofore have been inaccessible except by long and arduous journeys on mules, springless carts or sedan chairs. Roads are incidentally one of the few beneficent by-products of militarism, for many of them have been built to meet the strategic necessities of ambitious generals. Besides communications, there is a frontier-like bustle of new building, opening of new banks, establishment of new factories, tearing down of city walls—development, in short. The direct motive is the new avenue

¹ China Year Book, 1929-1930, pp. 434-43.

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of profit, rather than a thought-out belief in modernization by industrialism, but the results are the same.

China is committing itself in action. Can it carry out the commitment successfully? This involves not only the will to industrialize, but also the capacity and the means. The last is an issue of fact. Has China the raw materials requisite for large-scale factory production? The one-time roseate estimates of China's riches have been subject to considerable deflation in recent years; it may be that they have been deflated too much. In the desire for sober scientific truth as to the extent of China's natural resources there has been a tendency to assume that there are none except those which have already been discovered, whereas only the most cursory exploration has been made. It is forgotten that some of America's deposits have been found only after the country had been settled and developed. Much more intensive surveys will have to be carried out before any definitive statements can be made as to how much China has of coal, iron, oil and the minerals and metals necessary for machine production. It is clear that China is not the El Dorado that allured with such a bright promise not so long ago. It is not so happily endowed as the United States, and if it ever attains the industrial stature of the United States new sources of power will have to be discovered. The best study of available data gives by way of comparison the coal reserve of China as 2,330 metric tons per capita, as against 34,274 in the United States, while iron reserves are two tons per capita for China, as against 670 for the United

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States.² Too broad conclusions cannot be drawn from these figures. Even if they are final, China is still shown to have one thousand billion tons of coal and more than 800,000,000 tons of iron, with which a quite respectable factory system can be maintained. As the same authority cites, Japan has only one-fifteenth the coal reserve per capita that China has and three-fourths the iron reserve, yet Japan has already an industrial superstructure. Italy, even less favorably situated than Japan with regard to coal and iron, may be called an industrial country. There are no insuperable physical obstacles to China's adopting the factory system, no obstacles inhering in nature. There are other factors, not ordained, which will determine how successfully it can do so.

Not only desire for the power and riches conferred by the machine and possession of natural resources are necessary for the transformation to a mechanized society. Labor supply, mobile capital, technical proficiency and experience, and skill in organization are also required. Of labor supply there is, of course, a surplus, so much so as to constitute a social danger. Without protective measures, either through militant labor organization or preventive social legislation, the excess of available labor is liable to result in an exploitation not far from slavery. Already there is a disposition to transfer the working conditions of the craftsman in the household shop to the factory. But fourteen hours a day at the bench with three or four

² The most authoritative work on this subject is Bain, H. Foster, *Ores and Industry in the Far East*. This gives an invaluable bibliography of articles, brochures, etc. Torgasheff, Boris P., *Coal, Iron and Oil in the Far East*, published by the Institute of Pacific Relations, should also be consulted.

men, using hand tools, working at a pace determined substantially by the individual, stopping to gossip or gaze at the bustling life of the street outside the doorway or drink tea, are vastly different from fourteen hours in a factory, at a pace forced by a machine which whirrs on relentlessly and knows no exhaustion. And thirty cents a day in a village or a county-seat town is vastly different from forty cents in a large city where the cost of living has been forced up by overcrowding. And the poverty of the village is vastly different from the degradation of the new industrial slum. One has but to see the factory districts across the river from Tokyo to appreciate the distinction. Tokyo offers a better test than Shanghai, because Japan has had its factories longer and has had at least the possibility of making an adjustment. There one finds Western congestion in Eastern squalor. The poverty of the natural East is grim and terrible, shocking to an Occidental, especially to an American, to whom even the peasant conditions of Europe are unfamiliar. The peasant of the East has enough to sustain life on an elemental animal plane, and no more. But in his poverty there is a certain natural, primitive, lower animal dignity. He keeps family identity and a certain self-respect as an individual. In the poverty of the factory slum there is degradation, which is more deadly than primitiveness. The barracks of Honjo, in Tokyo, or Yangtzepoo, in Shanghai, where workers are huddled together as in a pen, one against the other without privacy or air or light, may be electric-lighted, outside may be a street-car line and on the same street a moving picture theater. The workers in

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such a district are doubtless better off in things than their relatives who stayed in the village; their range of consumption is wider. Yet they have sunk in the human scale. It is the distinction between poise on a low level and degradation, the distinction between natural poverty and the slum. The labor supply is ample in China. There is no reason to believe that it will not be also adequate. There is no reason to believe that its undoubted skill, as shown in the Chinese crafts, will not be transferable to the machine. The difficulties presented by labor will arise not from lack of aptitude or adaptability in the worker but from problems of management. Properly handled, the worker in the factories of Shanghai, Hankow and Wusih has already shown that he can produce at the machine with profit.

The lack of liquid capital is a more serious obstacle. Under the existing circumstances a rapid expansion is not to be looked for. Were conditions otherwise, credits could be mobilized outside China, to the mutual advantage of China and the lending nations. But this presupposes mutual confidence, which does not exist and cannot exist. On the part of foreign lenders, there is no belief that their loans would be secure, and in all probability they would not be, as China is today. For quick and intensive development credits would have to be advanced to the government for fundamental enterprises such as railways, harbors, mines, power plants, new canals and waterways, afforestation, drainage and reclamation projects. But with the country torn by civil war and governments changing from year to year, such loans could not and would not

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be made without security in the form of semi-political or administrative control. Public revenues would have to be pledged and managed by foreign representatives to protect them from diversion for other purposes than the loan service. And this the Chinese in turn cannot accept in the light of their experience. They have found such loans to be merely entering wedges for political domination for imperialistic purposes. With the background of the last fifty years they are suspicious of foreign purposes and cynical about foreign motives. They have good reason to be. To give to foreign interests the degree and kind of control which they must have to make the loans which China needs for development is to put China's head in a noose. The trap might be sprung; it might not. But the decision would not rest with China.

For the present, at least, China must depend on its own financial resources. The establishment of modern banks in the last few years has resulted in the mobilization of considerable supplies of capital, which have been put to use in starting and financing factories and mills of all kinds. Even so, the amount is trivial compared with the need. It is limited, first by the fact that China has not been accustomed to keep its wealth in liquid form and, second, by the fact that the Chinese themselves have no confidence. It is significant that the important Chinese modern banks and the most important industrial development are still in areas under foreign influence, notably Shanghai. There alone is there real security, there alone is there sure immunity from military extortions and official exactions. Even so, the Shanghai banks have had to

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advance enormous sums to the Nanking government since 1928 and are now in the position of underwriting Nanking in its civil wars, but the normal operation of business is not impeded, as, for example, in a once flourishing city like Chengchow, in Honan, where mills have had to shut down for nearly all of three years. The railway being commandeered for military movements, materials cannot be brought in or manufactured products shipped out, to say nothing of attempting to cope with the delirium of taxation. Moreover, until there is a commercial code, with a judicial system that can be trusted to dispense impersonal justice, money will not be put out for use beyond immediate personal supervision. It will not be lent to corporations by way of purchasing shares. There is as yet no regulation of the relation of public trusteeship. All that which the guild was, under the conditions to which the guild was suited, must first be built up, under the conditions of industrialism to which the guild is inadequate.

The technical knowledge and experience requisite to industrialization are lacking, of course; so is the capacity to organize on a large scale. And these are not quickly acquired. In themselves these are not a gift of God, vouchsafed some and withheld from others. In the seventeenth century they were similarly lacking in England, Germany and the colonies on the North American continent. But China must learn the technology of mass production by machinery, first by unlearning all that it knows and then by applying new knowledge in competition against nations which are already technically finished. Japan is across a narrow strip of sea, in South Manchuria

and on the China coast in so far as it has a number of industrial plants already commanding a large share of the Chinese market. The Japanese are now a large factor in the textile industry, the most highly developed industry in China thus far. In addition to Japan there are the United States, Great Britain and Germany in fierce competition for Chinese trade. Until 1929 China had to contend against the additional handicap of a uniform tariff fixed so low that it could not serve as protection for native industry and moreover was valueless, since, being uniform, it levied the same duty on raw materials as on manufactured products. Since 1929, however, the treaty Powers have lost the right of determining China's tariff. Chinese students can be sent to European and American technical schools for training and foreign experts can be brought to Chinese plants; but essentially the training can be obtained only in the doing. The tutelage will be costly. Yet there is no biological reason why Chinese cannot eventually succeed. They have been able to adapt themselves to changing conditions before. As has already been said, Chinese emigrants to other lands have been able to find a place for themselves in all climes, in every social environment and at every kind of work. They will be able in time to adapt themselves to a new social environment at home, too.

There is no serious impediment in biological factors; there is in the psychological and social. Not only are new habits to be acquired, but old ones are to be overcome. It is commonly said that the Chinese have no flair for coöperative activity, but that is scarcely true, since the

guild was a highly evolved form of collective action. Yet the guild was an agglomeration of independent activities for purposes of solidarity rather than joint operation. It was a pooling of a number of small organizations for specific purposes rather than a large organization. The Chinese are as yet wholly inexperienced in organization on a wide scale, and their attempts have not been wholly successful. Industrial enterprises started in recent years have prospered, so far as the operations balance sheet shows, and yet have gone under or are carried on unprofitably or unsoundly, because there is no tradition of corporate practice and the first principles have been violated. In the first place, the old habits of operating on a personal basis are carried over. The demands of family have to be met. In China nepotism has always been not an irregularity but part of the natural order. The communal principle on which the family was organized demanded it. Each individual could claim support from the family when in need; he was also obligated to share with it if prosperous. To this day an official newly appointed to a high post is soon called on by relatives to find subordinate places for them, and he usually does. He must, and he considers it natural to do so. Nor do others consider it unnatural or illegitimate or out of the way if in six months he is surrounded by near relatives, distant relatives, friends and friends' relatives. The same practice is carried over into business. When business was a family affair, as it usually was, this even conduced to harmony and efficiency; the operating concern was the family. But a corporation is impersonal, and there the practice is fatal,

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as experience in Shanghai demonstrates. The waste and inefficiency of choosing personnel for other reasons than suitability to the task have already doomed more than one enterprise to failure which otherwise would have flourished. It is significant that the Chinese have been more successful in smaller plants with fewer employees and less complicated machinery than in the larger. In some respects it may be regrettable to have to depersonalize business; the obverse has its ugly sides, as one may see in New York or a steel milltown. But without depersonalization large-scale business becomes too cluttered to function and is, besides, eaten away by waste.

Large-scale business must be impersonal in management because it must be impersonal in ownership. The amount of capital which must be mobilized to found and maintain large industry can be raised only through a corporation. Money will be forthcoming for the capitalization of a corporation only if there is confidence that it will be administered honestly and efficiently, that is, with regard only to the advancement of the business which is to be conducted. There is no ground for such confidence now. There cannot be until there is a conscious sense of public trusteeship—rather, until the sense becomes so deeply ingrained as to be unconscious. That sense does not exist now. A business established with the money of others is not administered objectively, nor is the money which passes through it handled objectively. Dishonesty is the wrong word, because a moral issue has not been drawn. There is no conception of what is involved in the trusteeship of funds of what may be called impersonal

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ownership, nor is there any technique of administering such trusteeship. The Chinese hesitate to put their money into enterprises at the control of men they do not know. They are quite right in hesitating; but until there are means of limiting the use of such funds for the purposes for which they are advanced or, better, until no means are necessary to safeguard them, there will be little capital to underwrite industrial advancement and industries will not be conducted successfully even when capital is provided. For China the technical problem presented by industrialization is not primarily the difficulty of producing goods by machinery but the necessity of thinking of economic activity in different terms, breaking out of deeply grooved habits and throwing off the traits bred by such habits—for the traits are as likely the product of the habits as vice versa; they are acquired out of the social environment rather than racial. To master this problem will not be easy, and it will take a long time, but until it is mastered China will not function efficiently or successfully as a mechanized society. But on the other hand there is no reason inhering in the nature of things why the adjustment should not be made in time.

There has been considerable speculation as to what form industrialism will take when it does materialize in China, whether it will merely repeat the pattern of the huge factory in the factory town, with all the social and economic accompaniments thereof, or be given a more original stamp. Concretely, will there be huge centers—Pittsburghs, Detroits, Lancashire mill towns and Ruhr steel towns—with single corporations of tremendous out-

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put and ramifications in every sphere? Or will there be modern industry, with production by machinery, but organized on a small scale—small factories, using high-power machinery and every labor-saving device but employing not more than one or two hundred workers? There are those who believe that the development is more likely to be in the latter direction, which would be more consonant with Chinese experience and habits. This would be more nearly practicable if there were also coöperative agencies for purchasing raw materials and marketing finished products. Also it would avert the more inhumane results of industrialism. Yet the whole trend in the West is in the other direction. Rationalization, mergers, distribution through chain merchandizing, the horizontal corporation like the Henry Ford Company or the Stinnes undertakings after the war all point the way of economic evolution. The economies possible to large-scale operation make it irresistible, and the magnetic movement toward even greater concentration in the United States and Germany is not accidental. It is foreordained by the nature of the machine and comes in logical sequence. So England is discovering after seeking to cling to the instinctive industrial individualism which is congenial to its habits. China surely will not be able to resist the tide, and what may be expected is a gravitation of capital, enterprises and labor toward Shanghai, Hankow, Canton and a few other great cities and a duplication of the external conditions of the United States. Allowance must be made for one potentiality. That is the development of giant power, with cheap transmission. With this potentiality fulfilled a devo-

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lution of industry is likely or at least feasible. Otherwise the present trend is irresistible, in France and Italy and China as in the United States.

The possibility that the factory system on Chinese soil may take on another color and a different texture and have different results is by no means to be wholly excluded. Thus far in its history whatever has touched China has been absorbed into it rather than imposing itself on China. But it should be added immediately that never before has anything of such disruptive and re-creative force as the West and the machine civilization struck China. Nevertheless it has been said of the Chinese that if a Ford car or a monkey-wrench be sent to China direct from an American factory and given to Chinese to use, after three months that car or monkey-wrench will be working satisfactorily and quite as it ought to, but it will not be quite the same car or monkey-wrench that it was when shipped from San Francisco and not quite like any car or monkey-wrench that remained in the United States. It will look just a little different and work just a little differently. Something will have happened to it. It will have taken on a certain Chinese character. The same may be said for Christianity, constitutional government, communism, Grand Rapids furniture, American college life or anything else taken over from the West. In time the same may also have to be said for industrialism. But now that can only be conjectured.

What is already factual is that there has been a beginning of industrialization. How far has it gone? Except in tendency, not very far as yet, although the tendency is

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unmistakable and is impelled by an irresistible drive. Concrete figures are of lesser importance. They change too rapidly, and they are also unattainable. There is no fact-collecting agency in China, and such figures as there are cannot be relied on. Two carefully worked out estimates of the number of factories and total capitalization in any single industry show a wide discrepancy. For one thing, there is the question of definition: what is a factory? What shall be taken as the basis of calculation—volume of capital, number of employees, kind and amount of machinery, size of output, classification of commodity produced, or a common denominator of all of these? As factories go in Chicago, Dresden, Manchester, Milan or Osaka, there are not many. But what of an establishment in a small town on the Yangtze using simple hosiery-knitting machinery and employing twenty hands only, but producing entirely by machinery: is it a factory? In Nanking, by no means an industrial town, there were in 1928 sixteen small foundries and ironworks, some of them newly established and some modernized blacksmith shops, a few employing fifty to sixty hands and most of them only ten or twenty. They make simple machines and machine parts for use in Nanking and for export to neighboring towns which are discovering the utility of labor-saving devices. Their output consists of light rice polishing machines, lithographic printing presses, hosiery knitters, cotton scutchers, noodle cutters and the like. Are they factories? Literally, yes; in the sense of what constitutes an industrialized society, no; yet they are already beginning to change the basis of production and distribution. They

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are the portents of a social and, therefore, of an industrial revolution. More important than the concentration of a number of great mills in a few centers is the gradual but widespread introduction of light and simply operated machines to replace tools and hand-labor. And this cannot be measured. Only a census of the most meticulous refinement would yield reliable statistics.

In summary it may be said that there are now in China 7,000 miles of railway, a few large iron and steel works, a few shipbuilding yards, approximately a dozen coal mines with modern equipment and roughly 1,000 factories of consequence; in addition there are telegraph lines all over the country, approximately fifty telephone exchanges, two hundred electric lighting plants and a few street car lines.³ The figure for factories is an average of various estimates. It may be an underestimate, but most figures err on the other side. An estimate made by an investigator for the United States Department of Commerce put the number of factories producing articles of foreign type in 1922 at 740.⁴ On the other hand, T. Y. Tsha, of the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the Department of Social Affairs of the Chinese Municipality of Shanghai, estimated 1,000 for Shanghai alone in 1928. The consensus of calculations puts the number of employees in factories at 500,000, although far more are at jobs in which some machinery has to be used.

³ For a broad general treatment of this subject see Tayler, J. B., *Farm and Factory in China*.

⁴ Nelson, John H., United States Assistant Trade Commissioner. Trade Information Bulletin 312, Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce of Department of Commerce, June, 1925.

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The most substantial development has been in textiles. When textile and flour mills are reckoned, the greater part of Chinese industry is accounted for. The Department of Commerce survey just quoted found that of 740 factories 439 or 60 per cent were engaged in making textile products. Of these 202 were making cotton piece goods; 87, socks and stockings; 64, cotton yarn; 41, cotton towels; 25, cotton thread. Of the rest, 66 were soap factories; 42, candles; 38, flour; 19, cigars and cigarettes; 11, paper; 7, pencils; 7, biscuits. In addition to these there were smaller establishments—canneries, sugar mills, cement mills, egg-products factories, glass factories, cold storage plants, tanneries, silk filatures, printing works, etc. To these must be added now match factories, which have been growing in numbers and importance in recent years, though many of them combine modern machinery with handwork.

At the end of 1928 there were in China a total of 120 cotton mills with 3,850,000 spindles. Of these 73 were Chinese-owned, 44 Japanese and 3 British. In spindleage the Chinese had 57 per cent, the Japanese 39 per cent and the British 4 per cent. Of the total number of 241,559 workers employed in these mills, which is illustrative of the relative importance of textiles in Chinese industry, 65 per cent were in Chinese mills, 30 per cent in Japanese and 5 per cent in British. Of the total capitalization of Taels 297,400,000 (normally about \$220,000,000), 28 per cent was Chinese, 70 per cent Japanese and 2 per cent British. Thus, the Chinese, with 57 per cent of the total spindleage, had 28 per cent of the capital, while the Japa-

nese, with 39 per cent of the spindleage, had 70 per cent of the capital, a disproportion which reflects the situation in Chinese industry and the disadvantage under which it operates. The Chinese mills work from hand to mouth, being obviously undercapitalized, and at the first sign of depression or stringency go under.⁵ The distribution of the cotton mills also is significant. Fifty-nine of the 160 are in Shanghai alone, and 78 in Kiangsu Province, in which Shanghai is situated. Three-quarters of the mills are in six cities—Shanghai, Tsingtao, Wuhan (comprising the tri-cities of Hankow, Wuchang and Hanyang), Tientsin, Tungchanhai and Wusih. Of the 120 mills 82 employ from 500 to 2,500 hands. Only 19 have fewer than 1,000 hands and only five more than 5,000. And 79 employ between 10,000 and 40,000 spindles; only eight have fewer than 10,000 spindles and 24 more than 5,000 spindles. The first cotton mill was established in China in 1891. Prior to 1895 there were only six mills, all native-owned, the industry having its real beginning only after the treaty which concluded the war with Japan gave foreigners the right to import machinery and engage in manufacture on Chinese soil. By the end of 1896 there were 12 mills, with a total spindleage of 417,000. By

⁵ These figures are taken from a brochure prepared for the biennial conference of the Institute of Pacific Relations, October, 1929: *Extent and Effects of Industrialization in China*, by Franklin L. Ho and Hsien Ding-fong, directors, Nankai University Committee on Social and Economic Research. These figures are slightly different from other compilations. Reference should also be made to King and Lieu, *China's Cotton Industry*, published in Problems of the Pacific, 1929, the Proceedings of the Third Conference of the Institute of Pacific Relations, 1929. Another competent study is that of E. A. Mann, of the Textile Division of the United States Department of Commerce, Special Bulletin No. 488, Textile Division.

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1902 there were 17, by 1911, 32 and by 1918, 49. In the next five years there was a startling and sudden increase to 120, the result of the world war, which shut off a large measure of cotton imports, forced prices up and made profits soar. There was, in consequence, a wild rush to invest in cotton mills, in many instances with just enough capital to start operations.

Flour milling ranks next in importance to textiles. Including the Manchurian provinces, there were at the end of 1928 a total of 192 mills in the country, according to a report of the United States Commercial Attaché.⁶ The first was established in 1896 by a Japanese company. By 1900 there were three, by 1905, 11 and by 1910, 31. Of the total number 119 were started since 1914. Because Manchuria is the largest grain-producing center 73 of 192 are in the Manchurian provinces. In Shanghai there are 27, in the Wuhan cities 32, in Tientsin 14 and in Wusih, near Shanghai, 12. The mill with the largest production is French-owned, in Harbin, in North Manchuria. It has a capacity of 17,000 bags daily. The largest single company, however, is Chinese-owned, operating seven mills in Shanghai, two in Wusih, one in Hankow and one in Tsinanfu, with a combined daily capacity of 80,000 bags or 4,000,000 pounds, a combined capital of \$5,000,000 and 2,500 workmen. The total capitalization for the country is estimated at \$30,000,000, a figure which must be taken with caution. Of this about two-thirds is Chinese. While the largest number of mills is in Manchuria,

⁶ Cf. also Franklin L. Ho and Hsien Ding-fong, *op. cit.*

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Shanghai has the largest production—112,500 bags daily, as against 110,000 for all of Manchuria.

Another industry which has become mechanized is silk reeling in steam filatures. In the four provinces in which steam filatures are centered—Kiangsu, Chekiang, Kwangtung and Szechuen—there are estimated to be approximately 500, of which nearly 300 are in Kwangtung, in the South.⁷ Of the 104 filatures operating in Shanghai, less than a fifth had been established by 1900 and only half by 1914. In 1918 there were 71. One-third, therefore, have been started in the years since the war. The scale of their operations may be gathered from the fact that 39 of the 104 employ between five and six hundred hands and more than two-thirds between 400 and 700. The total number employed in the steam filatures of Shanghai is 63,900, of whom practically all are women and girls.

The growth of match factories is an illustration of the scale of industry in China now. Computations by the Government Bureau of Economic Information give a total of 189 such factories, evenly distributed over the country. Figures for capitalization obtained for three-fifths of them show a total of less than \$5,000,000, from which it may be gathered that they are not large.

The growth of modern banks is perhaps most significant. Here, too, there is the difficulty of definition. Many so-called modern banks are modern in organization and profession, modern in all except the accepted principles of

⁷ Quoted by Franklin L. Ho and Hsien Ding-fong, *op. cit.*, from Chinese Government Bureau of Economic Information tables.

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commercial banking. In effect they are personal organs, financial adjuncts to the business or political enterprises of a few owners. This is especially true of banks started by officials and their henchmen. They exist for the purpose of making so-called loans and buying government bonds at illegitimate discounts. They are actually a form of political maneuver and primarily function as aids to political moves. The China Year Book for 1929-30 lists 231 supposedly modern banks, of which all but 26 have been started since 1918. A large proportion of these can be disregarded for the reasons just given. They are fly-by-night affairs. A more sober estimate gives 141 in 1926.⁸ This report puts combined capital at \$180,000,000, of which half is paid up. A more accurate figure would be 70, of which not more than 15 pass the test of sound commercial banking as understood in the West. Yet they are already playing an important rôle in underwriting the financing of new business of dimensions impossible without credit facilities. They are mobilizing sources of capital to support the rising structure of new industry.

The statistics which have been cited are not to be taken as scientific or even accurate. They are neither. The materials for making a scientific study of machine industry in China are wanting. No analysis would be worth while which was based on the data now accessible. On the evidence attainable no conclusions would be valid. All that can be done is to give the rough outlines of a picture of economic change, with new institutions already taking

⁸ "Banking Institutions in China," *Chinese Economic Monthly*, January, 1926. Vol. III, No. 1, pp. 21-41.

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root. Industrialization has begun. There is already a concentration of factory production in a few centers, in which the tone of economic life is set by the characteristics of machine industry—cities like Shanghai, Hankow, Tientsin, Harbin and Dairen, the last a Japanese leasehold. But more than this: throughout the country in regions where there is nothing approximating a factory properly speaking, machinery and the necessities of conforming to the use of the machine are being introduced into the old industry, appreciably influencing the old industry and setting up already a condition of struggle for survival between the old and new which has marked repercussions on the life of communities scarcely aware of what is involved.

CHAPTER XI

FILLING IN THE VOID: POLITICAL

THE luxury of dispensing with government is one China can no longer afford. Government is now a necessity, in fact the first necessity. The price of material advancement through mechanization is active government, a price at which many Americans still balk, remembering fondly the doctrines of Thomas Jefferson. When China was built on a cellular unitary plan, each cell an independent organism joined to some of the others by propinquity and to all by cultural homogeneity but not interdependent with them, government could be symbolical, ceremonial and ancestral, presiding but not ruling. And so the government of old China was, as we have seen. There was no reason for it to be anything more. The people ruled themselves by tradition within their villages through the family.

Now this is no more. The cellular walls have fallen, pierced by communications, transportation, industrialism, influences and ideas. All parts of the country are, or are becoming, interdependent. A country which has foreign affairs touching as intimately as they must when there is intercourse by wireless, cables and fast ships, and goods are interchanged and money borrowed and lent as once between adjoining streets; a country with railways, telegraphs, factories producing for a whole region, banks giv-

ing credit and affecting business a thousand miles away, corporations determining living conditions for a million persons—such a country must have an active agency of supervision and control. When forces have broken through cellular walls there must be some organ of regulation that also crosses cellular lines. This is not unique to China. The steady increment of power to the federal government in the United States in the last fifty years is not accidental or due to the caprice or ambition of its presidents; it grows out of the same causes. It has followed automatically on the integration of the country by railways and telegraphs, concentration of capital, great corporations and nation-wide public utilities. With all the vocal veneration for the literal Constitution of the Fathers, the Constitution has been stretched beyond all recognition by the Fathers. It had to be. Centralization of government is inescapable under the conditions of the twentieth century. It is in fact essential to existence.

China now has no government. It has none now, just when it most needs one. Its government was broken down by the same forces which the more insistently demand one, that is, by the shock of the West and the civilization of the West. What lies before China politically is much too glibly called reconstruction. What is meant is construction. To reconstruct would be futile. What has been and what is now are too unrelated. To restore the government of old China, even at the highest level it ever attained, would not meet the demands of the time. That government might be honest and efficient and high-minded, and yet be wholly inadequate for the functions which a gov-

ernment must exercise in a China which is industrializing. What China must do is far more difficult. It must build entirely anew on foundations freshly laid and from specifications which it cannot read, because it has had no experience with the symbols or markings. It faces the added obstruction of having to work among ruins. Not only a new organization of government is necessary, but a new concept of government, a new philosophy on which to set up a political system; and this implies a new philosophy of life conforming with the new way of life on which China is now entering.

There is something of a circle of frustration. Substantial progress toward a new social and economic order is conditional on a stable and efficient government. On the other hand, the kind of government which is essential is attainable only with the wealth which the new order can create and under the conditions which it makes possible. The first essential is, of course, peace. The last few years have proved that the continuance of civil wars, with the destruction of property and capital, the clogging of transportation and communications and the marauding of vagrant armies, is fatal to hope as well as progress. If unification is impossible, then there must be at least a cessation of fighting and a stabilization of the status quo. This is the *sine qua non*; until it is assured nothing else can be discussed and China will continue to hang in suspense, as at present.

Peace is only the negative aspect. Much more is required. It is a sound instinct that has expressed itself in the zeal for roads in recent years, even though a sense of

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proportions has sometimes been blurred. Without facilities for communication and transportation the development of industrialism is excluded. It matters little if capital is raised and technology mastered if goods cannot move freely and quickly to the market. At present the market for manufactured goods is limited to a narrow radius from the locality in which they are produced. The cost of transportation is prohibitive at greater distances. It is cheaper, for example, for a Shanghai flour mill to import wheat from the Dakotas, paying railway freight to Seattle and steamer freight across the Pacific, than to bring it to Shanghai from Shensi Province, in the Northwest. To transport the wheat from the Wei basin in Shensi to the railway 400 miles away, using coolie carriers, costs more than the price of American wheat plus freight charges from the American Middle West to Shanghai. Although there is wheat enough grown in China to supply all the mills, the latter are not always able to operate at full capacity for lack of raw material, while flour has to be imported from the United States to meet the demand. There have been periods of famine when grain was plentiful in the Manchurian provinces or the Northwest but could not be brought to the stricken area in time to sow the next crop or cheaply enough to relieve the immediate suffering. It will be of no avail to discover sources of raw material and learn how to extract them if they cannot be brought to factories cheaply enough to compete with imported manufactured products. Railways, improved waterways and highways must come before industrialization can go very far.

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Next in importance to transportation facilities is a unified currency system. The present currency is a chaos. For one thing, it is based on silver, itself a handicap, as demonstrated by the crushing blow to trade with the phenomenal decline in silver value in 1930. Furthermore, there is no token money acceptable at face value in all parts of the country. While it is no longer necessary to carry silver bullion on a journey, one who wishes to travel across three provinces must still go burdened with a box of silver dollars. As for small coins, they are unlikely to be accepted at face value in an adjoining province. If not every province, then every region has its own currency, and a transaction across a provincial border usually involves a transaction in foreign exchange. In every business deal there is a speculative element. Bookkeeping is frantic. A factor of perplexity and uncertainty is added to every business confined to one locality. The same applies to standards of weights and measures, which now vary not only from trade to trade but city to city. Dealings between two business houses in widely separated localities are likely to be in terms which have to be interpreted to both sides. With business so complicated, it must be constricted. Under those conditions industrialism is choked at birth.

A new body of commercial law is necessary; rather, a body of law, for there is none now. Regulation of trade practices by guilds no longer serves. The guild is local and confined to one trade or craft. Factory production breaks down both geographical and trade barriers. Obviously there must be uniform regulations for all places and all

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forms of business. Now there must be written law, not tradition, precedent, custom and common consent. For corporation business is too complex and too wide in its ramifications for tacit understanding. Also, since business must get beyond personal jurisdiction there must be uniform regulation of corporation practice and banking procedure. Without it money will not be invested in corporations. Law, however, is not sufficient. There must be courts to administer it. For the present, chamber of commerce tribunals and arbitral committees may be sufficient; they will not be when the scale of business extends. There must be a judicial system as a branch of government. Further, there must be regulation in another sense, in the sense of supervision and check. If public utilities, basic services and resources are not to be nationalized, which is rather dubious now since the reaction against communism put everything savoring of social control in bad odor, they must be regulated in the public interest. Even America, despite the sanctity of *laissez faire* for amalgamations of capital, has had to come to regulation and control. An executive arm of government also is required, therefore.

Lastly, there must be universal education. As industry becomes more intensively mechanized, the worker may tend to become more and more an automaton; nevertheless, if the middle and upper ranks of industry are to be filled, education must be widespread. American corporations employing masses of immigrant labor have found it worth while conducting classes in English, if only that machine tenders may be able to read safety rules. And a large proportion of an industrial population must have

some technical training, which means that there must be facilities for giving it. If quantity production is to be achieved, there must be advertising as an aid to marketing. The mass of the population must be able to read. Without regard to social considerations, the mass in an industrialized society cannot be a helotry. It must have at least a certain level of instruction.

The requirements just stated, all indispensable to industrialization, can be met only by a government. Yet it is only after industrialism has knitted the country together and released wealth for public use that the government can be expected to meet them. Railways, canals, harbors, courts, schools, a new national currency and trained administrative bodies demand prodigious sums. These sums can be raised by taxation only when there is a greater production of wealth to be taxed. And only after schools have turned out a generation with the beginnings of education, communications have provided channels for the gathering and expression of public opinion and there is a citizenship with political consciousness, can the government exercise its authority efficiently. There must be a unified government before there can be settled conditions and the building of railways and the founding of a school system; but a unified government also is the result of railways and schools. What the government of China must do, therefore, is lift itself by its bootstraps.

For twenty years first one government and then another has tried to do so. All have failed. One failure after another has had to be liquidated, each with a heavier net loss to the Chinese people. In part the explanation

is the same as for the failure of cotton mills, banks and other modern business enterprises. They were all unsubstantial; there was too little basis of capital. As many of the banks and mills were started financially on a shoe-string, so the various revolutions since 1911 were launched intellectually on a shoe-string. The desire to launch out into new fields was sound; it was, in fact, necessary to do so in order to survive. But too little thought was taken of the requisites of success and too little provision made for subsequent strain. The constructive side of the revolution has been without roots from the very beginning. It has been feeble because sapless. The need of revolution cannot be questioned; it was foredoomed. The kind of revolution attempted can be sharply questioned. Its failure may also have been foredoomed.

A certain unreality hangs over all these twenty years. There has been something specious in almost every major event which has affected the course of politics. From 1911 to 1930 every broader movement has been generated in a kind of hybridism concealed by a glittering veneer, beneath which there was vacuity. If one movement after another has had its hour and passed, one cause after another had its loyalties and died away, one doctrine after another been enshrined in slogans and then forgotten, it may be because behind them lay no real conviction, no knowledge, no understanding. They were not out of the soil of China. They had no relation to the previous life or thought of the race. They had no association. There was not even an attempt to graft them to the trunk of Chinese thought and habit and custom; they were simply

brought in with a flourish, flung into the atmosphere amid commotion—and then left to wither.

From the perspective of twenty years the idea of a republic, full-blown and literal, instituted over night on a people without concept of nationality and utterly lacking in political consciousness, seems grotesque. The Manchu dynasty had served its time. It had to go. There would have been no particular advantage in picking some other family out of the air to start another dynasty. There was as much reason to have a republic as a monarchy. But it was the exaltation of the republic to an end in itself that was irrational, and the attempt to import it full-grown from America and expect it to function as in America, that was ridiculous. It was the elevation of the details of constitutionalism as sacred causes, to be defended in civil wars, that was absurd. For years there were passionate quarrels over the technical rights of parliament and issues raised over checks and balances, the relation of executive to legislative, to be argued with elaborate documentation from American sources. One of the reasons may have been that the most ardent protagonists of the republic as such knew more about America than they did about China. This was part of the price paid for intellectual deracination, for sending boys to American colleges, without any real foundation of Chinese learning, letting them pick up a smattering of American phrases without the context in American practice, and then bringing them back to China with the expectation that they would be able to fit themselves into the Chinese environment. They could not. They were hybrids—neither foreign nor Chinese. They

came back with zeal, enthusiasm, a spirit of idealism and impatience. Their intellectual equipment was drawn from the Constitution and text-book civics; of the anatomy of American politics in being they were wholly ignorant. Also they brought back the American belief in phrases, in easy mechanical contraptions for complex situations, and in the universal solution by "passing a law." To remedy a social ill grown out of two thousand years of habit or racial psychology or climate or cultural bias or social maladjustment—they passed a law; and then forgot, and passed another law to remedy something else. On paper it was a perfect government. It had only one flaw: it meant nothing to the Chinese people and they blandly ignored it. It never existed. Sun Yat-sen and his court sounded trumpet calls to the Chinese people to rally to the barricades in defense of constitutionalism; the Chinese people did not even know what constitutionalism was. All that were not held by personal loyalty to Dr. Sun or did not depend on his success for their living went calmly on their way, indifferent to the foreign pother in a foreign language.

In time there could be no more pretense that the republic was not a farce. Its failure was too palpable. But the logical conclusion was not drawn that it failed because it was too unrelated to Chinese experience, too alien in spirit, in terms scarcely translatable to Chinese understanding. The lesson was not drawn from experience that whatever was not attuned to Chinese practice could at best be only adapted, and then slowly and simultaneously with education. No lesson was learned at all. For immediately

on grasping that the American republic could not be introduced into China ready-made and at once, the same men leaped at Russian communism, apparently oblivious to the fact that it was at the other extreme of theory and practice. And for a few years the slogans of Moscow Marxism were shouted as lustily as those of Washington, D. C., representative government had been a few years before. Interest in parliamentarism and constitutionalism died unnoticed and without burial, itself significant as to how far it had penetrated beneath the surface. Democracy became suspect as precipitately as it had become sacrosanct. And just as the procedure of American republicanism was grafted on to the Chinese trunk with library paste, so now the procedure of party dictatorship was grafted, also with library paste. The Kuomintang, the Nationalist Party which never had had even organization, suddenly became endowed with more than personal, with Godly identity. The nationalist revolution, the social revolution, the intellectual revolution, the industrial revolution—all were constricted into a framework imported from Moscow, set up as it stood and almost without being unpacked and hung with a huge sign, "Party Dictatorship." It stood intact for a while, because it was imposing. Just so the republic seemed imposing for a year or two and, while it seemed imposing, stood. And then the new scaffold toppled, for the same reason that the republic did. It had no foundation.

It has not yet been scrapped, however, and there lies one of the basic difficulties since 1928. Theoretically China is governed today by a party dictatorship—the dictator-

ship of the Kuomintang. Theoretically the sovereign power resides in the Party, and the Nanking government derives its mandate from the Party and is answerable to the Party. Now, that might be a workable device for transition to popular representative government if the Party really were a party. But it is not, and never has been. It was synthetically endowed with a spurious identity in the period of the Russian ascendancy. The Kuomintang has a definite place in Chinese history but not as a party. It has been, rather, the vehicle of an idea, the idea of revolution, of break with the past. It has miscarried the idea—led it off on wild divagations—but carried it. To conceive of the Kuomintang as a party in the Western sense is misleading. It has always been too inchoate, too lacking in cohesion, composed of too many discordant, even irreconcilable elements, and too unstable in policy and program. It had, in fact, never thought out a program. There was only one point of unity—the desire for break with the past.

As an historical movement this may have been enough, but as an instrument of government, as a dictatorship, it is of course lacking. When suddenly lifted to the rôle of dictator, a rôle which the Kuomintang had never sought and did not understand and which fitted it badly, the results were almost a burlesque. Immediately all those who had sincere motives and many more who wanted to dip into the flesh-pots became members of the Kuomintang, including many who had been proscribed by it and who as officials in the old régime had turned thumbs down on anybody connected with the Kuomintang. All other

parties were abolished, but there were just as many as before. The difference was only that all called themselves Kuomintang. The theory of party dictatorship imported from Moscow was preserved in externals. There were local branches which locally exercised sovereignty as nationally the party did at Nanking. The results were almost operatic. Irresponsible youngsters and rogues who used them got control of local party headquarters and set themselves up as censors and inquisitors over a community, trying individuals as "counter-revolutionaries," setting up fantastic regulations, interfering in private business deals—in Shanghai they nullified the sale of a newspaper by proclamation—prescribing new social customs and prohibiting others and making themselves at best a nuisance and at worst a pest. At times the party organization has been a serious embarrassment to the government itself. By its very origin and nature the Kuomintang is ruled out as an exclusive organ of government. In lieu of democratic government, which is impracticable in China now, and personal dictatorship, which never can succeed in China, a broad-based party dictatorship might serve until the Chinese people have developed a political consciousness. In that case, however, the party must have a clear set of principles, a definite program and a sharp test of fitness for membership. In Russia party dictatorship can work out, because the Communist Party has been welded together by years of organization, a common consciousness and preparation for dictatorship. There is a theory behind its rôle. There was no theory behind the

Kuomintang's rôle. There was only a skillful feat of propaganda, itself of alien origin and execution.

The Nanking government is still cluttered up with the remains of the era of specious dictatorship. It is still hobbled by a cumbersome, unwieldy organization in pyramids, concentric circles, pendent bodies and other bodies detached in space. It still holds by the scheme of a Central Executive Committee to carry out the supposed will of a national party congress, while within the Committee is an inner body which is the oligarchy that actually wields power. With this has been blended a little uncertainly the translations into political machinery of Dr. Sun Yat-sen's private political science, and the mixture is somewhat unhappy. Even so, on paper the scheme of government is not unimpressive, and a congress of political scientists could enjoy a stimulating afternoon of intellectual exercise on its merits and defects. But it exists only on paper. The structure of the actual working government need not be discussed. It is not worth analyzing, for it is too impermanent. It will disappear in its present form. It has too little connection with anything really Chinese. The structure of government is already being remodeled into an instrument for carrying out the wishes of individuals strong enough to impose themselves, those individuals in 1929 and 1930 being Chiang Kai-shek, his entourage and influential supporters.

This may be unsound from the point of view of progress toward stable government, but it is at least realistic and therefore preferable to literal fidelity to a scheme which is alien, artificial and imported ready-made, with-

out reference to Chinese conditions and needs. Before there can be any enduring progress toward a government suitable to the time, condition and demands of the country, all the relics of the absurd adventures of the last few years must be swept away. The psychology of those years must be abandoned. Fiat is so much paper. Pronunciamentos affect nothing. Glibness intoxicates. Panaceas are suspect and nostrums poison. Specifics swallowed whole from the West will cure nothing. China cannot get back to China, because there is no China; but it must get back to Chinese, for with Chinese it must work. The meretricious hybridism, the intellectual mongrelism, of the last few years must be bred out. A superficial knowledge of the West, of the externals of the West, with an equally superficial knowledge of China, has already had appalling results. From the positive point of view the last twenty years will not leave a trace. All that has been set up will be blown over. But negatively they have wrought unnecessary destruction and brought needless suffering. For the wild, futile adventures, embarked on one after another, the Chinese people have paid with agony. It was fore-ordained that they were to suffer, no matter what happened. But much could have been prevented if the men who took the responsibility of making a new China had been endowed with qualities of greater depth and substance. The mandarins who preceded them were retrograde and corrupt, but they had at least an intuitive understanding of their background. As it is, if the account were to be struck now for twenty years of revolution there would be little social gain to balance the cost in

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human pain. Little has been done to make the life of the masses of the Chinese people easier or fuller, and much to make their life harsher and more bitter.

Politically China must begin anew. First of all, it must be repeated, there must be peace. As this is written (in 1930) there is little prospect of lasting peace. Too many leaders remain, each with ambitions for exclusive mastery. Unfortunately, no one of them appears to be strong enough to achieve it. If one of them should succeed in eliminating all his rivals, there is no assurance that new ones would not spring up from among the swollen satraps at large all over the country. Hope for immediate unification is slight. There was ground for such hope immediately after the reduction of Peking and the removal of the capital to Nanking, but it has since glimmered. What is more likely is a long period of feudal strife, in which case China will descend lower than in its Dark Ages a few centuries before the time of Christ and again a few centuries after. Or, what is equally likely, the masses will be goaded to desperation, rise in frantic protest and then rend. In that event night will descend on half a continent. Yet, one may detect signs of a sediment of political progress under the seething. If two steps are lost, three are gained. The important military leaders of the last three years appear to be one grade above those of the preceding three years. They at least feel compelled to make moral professions. Actually they do give some heed to considerations beyond their personal ambitions, though not enough to conflict vitally with their ambitions. And a nucleus of personnel is forming, with technical proficiency in the

science of government, although as yet it is powerless and well-nigh voiceless. With five years of peace this group might be able to assert itself and accomplish something. While there is something ironical in the deluge of new laws, outlines of reconstruction, plans for railway and electric power systems, new regulations of land ownership, the relations of labor and capital, public utilities and the like, all of which are officially promulgated and then forgotten, they are evidence of a certain amount of basic thinking. In time this thinking may have fruition in act.

Another potentiality is that fighting will cease without decision and a number of military chieftains consolidate themselves in their respective strongholds. In effect, China will cease to exist as a single country and become an agglomeration of independent, semi-feudal principalities. A certain amount of economic advancement will be shown, since military chieftains have learned that the new ways of production are profitable and encourage them so long as the larger share of the profits accrue to themselves. This cannot endure very long. It never has in Chinese history. All the deeper, inner impulsions are always toward unity. So also are the forces of the time. Decentralized autonomy broke down at the end of the Manchu dynasty on the issue of a few railroads. The provinces insisted on building their own railroads in order to preserve their internal independence. The central government pressed on, with the weight of unanswerable economic arguments in its favor. The conflict precipitated the revolution of 1911 and overthrew the government, but the railways are still administered by the central government.

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The development of industrialism, even if impeded by political conditions, will give additional weight to economic forces. A magnetic pull will draw out some individual stronger than others who will do as the Ch'in Shih Huang Ti in the third century before Christ. He will eliminate the local chieftains and weld the country together into a single whole and the new central government will proceed to forge the links which the conditions of the twentieth century demand. In China, as today Europe is becoming united for economic reasons, the times make for unity. There will be a period of transition in which Chinese sectionalism and provincialism, embedded in the tradition of local autonomy, will resist the encroachment of federal government. In this period there will have to be some compromise between efficiency and instinct, some compromise such as the federal system of the American Constitution crystallized. But unofficially this will give way to substantive centralization, as it has in the United States. In China this may come in ten years, or in a hundred. It is more likely, unhappily, to be a hundred than ten.

CHAPTER XII

FILLING IN THE VOID: ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, CULTURAL

OF the physical needs of a new economic system enough has already been said. They represent only a beginning, not an end. The social implications will also have to be faced and dealt with. Machine production and all that goes with it cannot be merely superimposed and old institutions left unaffected. The experience of the Western world is evidence that what lies beneath is crushed. The old institutions peculiar to China will be no more likely to support the weight, pressure and speed of the machine. They will be crushed, abandoned or modified out of all recognition.

All the social problems that accompany industrialism will accrue to China. It must do something more than adopt a more efficient method of production. It must also create a new economic and social dispensation. What kind? Shall China do as Japan—merely copy the pattern of England and the United States? Shall it start where they did and go through the same course of evolution, repeating the errors of omission and commission now hardened into malformations and maladjustments incurable save by major operations? Or shall it profit by their experience and begin where they are now, by diagnosis and prophylactic seeking to escape the social ills which threaten fatal

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results in the West? Will it be able to? Will it be permitted to? Will the classes in China which have preëmpted industrial opportunities be willing to forego the profits of unrestricted exploitation in order to prevent undesirable social results? Will the West, which also stands to profit by unrestricted exploitation of industrial opportunities in China, permit China to exercise freedom of choice as to the kind of society it wants, even if the choice be inimical to the dominant conceptions in the West and at the same time curb Western profit both from trade and capital investment?

Concretely, the issue is whether there shall be complete *laissez faire* in industrial development, as there was in England and the United States, or whether from the beginning a social control shall be imposed by supervision, regulation, limitation, taxation, all impairing the freedom of private interests and denying the sanctity of private property. If there is to be such control, it must be imposed at the beginning or never. Shall natural resources be nationalized? Shall the riches under the soil be deemed to belong to whoever is fortunate enough to discover them or own the land under which they lie? Or shall they be held to be the property of the nation, to be administered by the state? Shall taxation be for revenue only—that is, for the maintenance of the organs of government—or for social benefits? In other words, shall a material share of private profits be taken away to be passed on to the mass in the form of aid to well-being—insurance, pensions, security against deprivation, public medicine, educational facilities, cultural opportunities and better public services?

Shall public utilities such as railways, local transportation, telegraphs and telephones, light and power, be publicly or privately owned? Shall the control of credit, with all its power over business, be unrestricted? Shall there be intervention in commerce by way of regulation of prices and apportionment of raw materials as during the world war? Shall the increasing value of land accrue to the owner or to the state as representative of the nation? How far shall basic industries be subject to state supervision, or shall the state itself undertake the development of basic industries? What limits shall be set, if any, on the accumulation of private fortunes? How far shall the state intervene in the relations of capital and labor? What steps shall be taken to avert the class struggle as it now exists in the West, and what steps can be taken? In sum, given that the result of industrialization will be an enormous increment in wealth, shall measures be taken to ensure a distribution of wealth so that the benefits of industrialism are more evenly spread than they have been in the West? In other words, how far shall the economic system be socialized?

To these questions and the larger implications which they state, thoughtful Chinese have been alert for some years. The slavish admiration of what the West has achieved economically, so common a generation ago, has given way to a healthy spirit of inquiry and criticism. Many of the Chinese who are most ardent for industrialization are wholly lacking in the boasting spirit of the developer. They have not been in Europe and America only to absorb uncritically. They have looked open-eyed at the

picture presented by American social conditions and they see it as not altogether roseate. Therein lies the chief value of Dr. Sun Yat-sen's *San Min Chu I*—the *Three Principles of the People*. It brought into clear focus this picture as seen with detachment and made articulate all the destructive criticism of Western social conditions which had lodged in the minds of so many Chinese who had been in the West. And it laid emphasis on the necessity of constructive measures of prevention.

The response to the social program of Soviet Russia was not wholly opportunist and impulsive. It was not altogether seduction by propaganda or blindness to Russian ulterior motives. The soil had been fertilized by the working in of the skepticism just referred to. There was an active disposition on the part of many educated Chinese to prevent the development in China of an overblown, irresponsible, arrogant plutocracy on the one hand and, on the other, an industrial proletariat which has exchanged one kind of poverty for another and in the transaction lost the security which the family system did afford. To them communism made an appeal. They looked at it sympathetically, not as a program to be taken over bodily, for on the part of nearly all of them, from Dr. Sun Yat-sen down, there was the outspoken conviction that unmixed communism was not suited either to Chinese social conditions or Chinese temperament, but as a declaration of larger intention. It crystallized the social point of view. In so far as the communist movement between 1924 and 1927 did serve to bring out and systematize this resolve, it made a contribution. What is perhaps most unfortunate

about the Russian episode is that by its hysterical drive, its over-acceleration of impulse without deliberation, it produced a reaction in which all that was healthy in the spirit of destructive criticism was crushed, perhaps not to rise again. All that was valid in the rejection of the Russian alliance has since been used as a pretext to cry down all legitimate efforts to curb the acquisitive instincts of the new profiteers in cities like Shanghai and Hankow. Because of excesses of workers and peasants after the more sober leaders had lost control in 1926, labor unions were crushed in 1928. If not crushed, they were "regulated," which was as bad. And now exploitation of the peasantry by the money-lending gentry is at least as bad as before. And both workers and peasants, having seen the gaudy promises come to nothing and, moreover, paid a terrible price for enrolling in the movements to realize the promises, have now lost faith as well as enthusiasm. They are disillusioned. They were enrolled without understanding or being given time to understand; now they do not understand why their efforts were vain. Now they can only believe that they had been subjected to a new kind of exploitation, and their temper is to have little to do with such things. To a Shanghai worker the net result of the last few years is that he lost innumerable days' pay on strikes which were supposed to win him ease and prosperity. It will take slow, patient work to overcome this disillusionment.

The whole spirit of China in 1930 is one of social reaction. The new industrial plutocracy is blatantly complacent in its feeling of security from any interference

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with the right to make as much money as possible as quickly as possible. And it is proceeding brazenly to do so, without regard to consequences. The attitude of the Shanghai factory owner is simple. Business must be advanced, so that there will be "prosperity"—with connotations familiar to American ears. All other considerations are communism. As for labor, unions are Russian poison. Let workers be obedient and industrious and happy at twelve hours in the factory for wages perhaps enough to keep them alive. As for their protection, employers will be benevolent and paternal. This is almost type statement for nine out of ten Shanghai bankers and industrialists when asked to give their social philosophy. As for the government, in the abstract it voices fidelity to the *San Min Chu I*; in the concrete it forbids strikes and proposes what it calls regulations for labor unions. By this it is meant, for example, that strikes must be sanctioned by the government. When it is remembered that the government depends on loans from rich bankers and industrialists who are also the employers of those who would strike, it may be conjectured how many strikes are likely to be permitted.

The social sores of industrialism are already beginning to run in China. It is not a matter of abstract speculation only. All the evils of the factory system are already to be found in Shanghai. The class struggle has already emerged. The lines of class division are already hardening. Despite repressive measures of the last few years there is a labor movement, and though at certain times and in certain places it may be driven underground there

is all precedent for the belief that it will survive. There is already too widespread a consciousness of class unity. The idea of organization is not in itself new to China. The guild had taught the idea of mass action, even though at most times the mass of labor and employer was pooled. The appearance of the labor movement coincides fairly closely with the appearance of industrialism in any strength. Like all other importations from the West the idea of exclusive labor organization first took root in Canton. The first unions, rather embryonic affairs, were formed in 1919, a year of upheaval in China in all respects. Students, curiously, played a large part, for then they took upon themselves the sponsorship of the new age. Among their activities was intensive public speaking to awaken social consciousness and the strongest appeal was the right of China to independence and the right of all Chinese to equality, one with another. At the end of 1921 there was a seamen's strike in Hongkong, which took on first an international and then a larger social aspect. Because Hongkong and the shipping interests there are British, the strikers rallied to their support the Chinese population generally, and because the strike was long drawn out and bitterly fought they arrayed a preponderant proportion of workers on their side. This gave a marked impetus to the formation of unions in the South. In 1922 an All-China Labor Congress was held in Canton, at which there were present 162 delegates from 200 unions in twelve cities, representing theoretically four hundred thousand workers. Credentials of representation are seldom closely scrutinized in China, and there may

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be a doubt as to how many of these unions were bona fide and how many of the delegates had been formally chosen. Nevertheless the congress was evidence that there were the beginnings of what could already be called a movement.

At about the same time railway unions were organized on the Peking-Hankow Railway and immediately launched on an aggressive policy. As a result they were suppressed. They declared a strike in retaliation and were thereupon attacked by troops and subjected to harsh reprisals. The movement was thus set back considerably, but there was, notwithstanding, in 1925 a second national labor congress in Canton and the following year a third. By this time two facts had changed the normal course of events. First was the fact that organized labor had become a pendant to political nationalism and communist agitation. Second was the Shanghai incident of May 30, 1925, a turning point in recent Chinese history generally. This was the firing on a student demonstration by foreign police, which lit a spark throughout the country. Labor retaliated by strikes and union members were enrolled by thousands. Unions became a political force and labor a political weapon. Strikes became daily affairs and the unions daily more aggressive. Then followed the reaction against communist and left wing activities, partly in protest against what had been undoubtedly excesses, and the unions went out of existence in the form in which they had originally started. When they reappeared, as they have nearly everywhere, it was in chastened mood, and they have never recovered their original esprit. But they

had already won official recognition. In 1925 the Peking government, none too sympathetic with liberal ideas, had drafted a bill recognizing labor's right to organize, but before the bill could become law there was one of the periodic *coups d'état* and the bill never was enacted. The Nationalist government in Canton had already the previous year formally recognized labor's right to organize, bargain collectively and strike.

The class struggle, although embryonic as yet, is being fought with the conventional weapon of the West—the strike. Nor has the disapproval of the government been able to serve as check. The strike is not a new phenomenon; there were strikes also in the régime of the guilds. And the boycott, which is a form of strike, has an honorable precedent in China. As in all other respects, the data on strikes are meager and are useful only to show trends. One compilation, admittedly incomplete, shows a total of 563 strikes between 1918 and 1925, in addition to 135 strikes in 1925 which were purely political protests against the foreign municipal administration of Shanghai.¹ These were distributed as follows:

1918	25	1922	91
1919	66	1923	47
1920	46	1924	56
1921	49	1925	183

The bulge in 1919 and 1925 can be accounted for by the general atmosphere of political unrest, in 1919 because of the Versailles treaty, which awarded the Kiao-

¹ *International Labor Review*, October, 1926.

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chow Peninsula to Japan, and in 1925 because of the May 30th incident. While the 135 strikes which were purely political in motive are not cited in this table, the general atmosphere played a part in those which were ostensibly for other causes.

It is hard to specify the causes of labor difficulties in China because of the loose organization of the workers and the informal, sometimes spontaneous character of strikes. Yet despite the artificially forced growth of unions and the mixed motives of leaders, who were almost never of the working class, economic considerations underlay a large proportion of the strikes. Of 563 strikes, demands for higher wages accounted for 233 and demands for special financial relief in the form of bonuses, extra grants and the like for 97. Primary economic factors therefore brought about 58 per cent of the strikes. Significantly, only 14 strikes were for shorter hours and better working conditions. The class struggle is as yet only in its first stages. The Chinese factory worker is still thinking only in terms of enough to live on.

More accurate data are now being gathered in the city of Shanghai through the Department of Social Affairs of the Chinese Municipality. These show 120 strikes for 1928, involving 218,332 workers and 5,327 factories, small plants and stores. Of these, 36, or 30 per cent, were for higher wages. The others were for a combination of causes, such as unjust dismissal, disputes over trivial incidents, complaints against management and the like. Only four involved the right to organize and six a reduction in working hours. It must be borne in mind, however, that

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although the specific, formal causes may be trivial they arise out of a general discontent, which is based on economic conditions. At bottom, labor disputes arise out of the disparity between wages and cost of living. On this subject it is difficult to speak with assurance. As to both wages and cost of living one can state averages and make intelligent guesses, but that is all. The Department of Social Affairs of the Chinese Municipality of Shanghai issued a statement giving average wage scales for various industries in 1928. In the first place, averages are tricky and in the second place the figures were not scientifically checked and differ from other statements made at the same time. But according to this computation, the average monthly earnings in different departments in the textile mills were from \$14.95 to \$24.02 for men, and from \$9.41 to \$15.44 for women. (In all these figures money is given in Chinese dollars, normally half the value of American dollars.) In flour mills the average monthly pay was \$17, in tobacco and cigarette factories \$20.75, in canneries \$25.13, in cement mills \$14.91, in shipbuilding yards \$33.30, in match factories \$19.14, in glass works \$15.92, in machine shops \$28.11, in electric power plants \$26.88 and in printing works \$39.43. The last figure is somewhat out of scale, since it includes wages paid by the Commercial Press, the largest printing establishment in the country and perhaps the most enlightened in management of all modern industrial plants. It is untypical, both as to wages, hours and working conditions. Counting 28 working days to the month, which is not untypical, it may be said that \$17 a month is good wages for a Shanghai

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factory worker of average skill and \$30 good wages for the more skilled workers. A large proportion of factory hands do not earn more than 50 cents a day and only a minority earn more than 60 cents. The average working day in mills was 11 hours. These figures are for men; the pay of women is considerably lower. No reliable index of retail prices exists but social workers in Shanghai have calculated that for a family of five to live with a minimum of decency, even according to the low Chinese standard, there must be a monthly income of \$18. Some put it as high as \$25. It may easily be seen why women and children work. A study made in Peking covering the years 1920-1924 showed that of the budget of the workingman's family 70 per cent went for food, 12 per cent for clothing, 8 per cent for rent, 5 per cent for fuel and 5 per cent for miscellaneous purposes.² This agrees substantially with other studies made in North China and with informal observations in the factory centers. In other words, so long as the worker is employed he may keep himself fed sufficiently to be able to work, house himself so as to keep dry and clothe himself so as to be able to make a public appearance; but that is all his work yields him. The Chinese labor movement may be stimulated from outside the working class, as often is charged against it, and it may have political and nationalistic complica-

² Meng T'ien-p'ei and Gamble, Sidney D., "Prices, Wages and Standard of Living in Peking," 1900-1924. *Chinese Political and Social Science Review*, July, 1926. For a good general picture of industrial conditions in Shanghai see also report by Eleanor M. Hinder, "Some Facts About the Present Industrial Situation in Shanghai," in proceedings of Conference on Christianizing Economic Relations in China, published 1927 by National Christian Council of China, Shanghai.

tions; but there are also solid economic grounds for the class struggle. Unless present tendencies are arrested there lies before the mass of the Chinese people industrial serfdom.

Of a slightly different complexion is the social problem on the land. Until industrialism is more general, this will be the more pressing, since by nearly all estimates no less than 80 per cent of the Chinese people are engaged in agriculture. The agrarian problem has two phases: first, the food supply is insufficient for the Chinese people; second, the lot of the peasant is crushing. The first is more technical and borders on industrialism. The second is purely social and involves the question of distribution between the classes. There is little prospect of the land being made more productive without external aid, which can only mean activity by the state. It is self-evident, for example, that civil wars must cease and the land be spared ravaging by soldiery. Secondly, drought and flood, now the two greatest menaces to agriculture, must be relieved by afforestation, irrigation projects and proper regulation of waterways. These can be carried out only by a government with resources and command of the highest engineering skill.³ In addition, there must be state aid in the form of agricultural education, experiment stations, research, a traveling staff similar to the American county agent and perhaps rural credit banks under government auspices. The wider use of agricultural machinery, especially in the grain lands in the North and Northwest,

³ For a full treatment of this subject see Mallory, Walter H., *China: Land of Famine*.

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waits on the more intensive development of industrialism, for even if enough landowners have the capital to buy the machinery there is not enough skill in the use of machinery generally. Even without machinery much can be done to increase the crop yield by supplying better seeds, fighting parasites, teaching a more efficient rotation of crops and a better allocation of crops according to the kind of soil and nearness to market. Private agencies can be of some assistance but essentially this demands government activity and the kind of government that accepts the responsibility and can carry it out.

Something of what could be done has been shown by two experiments in recent years under private auspices. One is the agricultural experiment station conducted at Ting Hsien, in Chihli Province, by the Mass Education Association, as it happens. At the experiment station research is carried on into agricultural problems of the district by men educated in Europe and America. In addition, demonstration centers are maintained for the benefit of peasants. A farmer is brought to the center and given an informal course right on the soil. In exchange he signs a document agreeing to use his farm as he has been taught and to explain the new methods to his neighbors. If he carries out his obligation and shows good results he is allowed to enter his son in an informal training school. Through encouraging the use of better seed the corn yield of the district had been increased by 25 per cent in 1927. By proper breeding of poultry the yield of eggs had also been materially increased. The other experiment is the formation of rural coöperative credit societies in

Chihli Province under the auspices of the China International Famine Relief Commission. This body had acquired a considerable amount of data on agricultural conditions through its relief efforts and came to the conclusion that the first approach was by way of proper financing of rural communities. The Reiffeisen method, well known in Central Europe, was adopted.⁴

The peasant is now generally at the mercy of the large landowner and the money-lending gentry. When he is hard pressed for some reason or a crop is delayed or the previous crop has been meager, he can carry himself until the next harvest only by pawning his personal effects, his implements or his land. For this he must pay interest at the rate of 36 per cent a year, perhaps more if the loan is for a longer period. In result, he often loses his land and ekes out existence thereafter as a renter. The preference of the moneyed classes for investing their funds in the much more productive opportunities in industry is tending to make money scarcer in the rural regions and interest higher. The Commission therefore extends credit through village societies with a carefully chosen membership but self-administering. Members pledge only their personal credit, although jointly responsible, and pay 6 per cent interest on loans. When a society is formed a traveling representative of the Commission pays a visit, explains the purpose and working of the plan, shows how the society's books are to be kept and in general informs himself of conditions in the village. An application for a loan

⁴ See China International Famine Relief Commission publications, Series B, No. 19. Rural Coöperative Credit in China.

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is then made and after proper investigation is acted on, another visit being made later to see that the society understands procedure and is being properly run. Periodic reports are insisted on and the Commission on its side provides a regular information service on the progress of similar coöperative societies, crop and marketing conditions, proper methods of cultivation and similar subjects. In 1925 a meeting was summoned, with two delegates present from each of the 54 societies then chartered, at which coöperative methods were explained in classroom sessions and related problems discussed. By the middle of 1928 there were 600 village societies operating, 140 chartered and the others on probation, with a total membership of 14,000. Loans had been made to the sum of \$80,000 (Chinese dollars) on which there had been only one default.

The agrarian problem, as old as China itself, has been sharply brought to public consciousness in recent years by the emergence of a peasant movement. Like the labor movement, the peasant movement was artificially stimulated and forced to unhealthy growth, with consequences unfortunate for the welfare of the peasants, but it also rests in fertile soil. Peasant associations appear to have started in Kwangtung Province in 1921. They were rather loose affairs with indefinite aims. It was after the reorganization of the Kuomintang under Russian stimulus in 1924 that the real unions were started, to sweep over the whole of the South with results that were electrifying and finally disastrous.⁵ The movement became a part of

⁵ See Chang, T. C., *The Farmers' Movement in Kwangtung*. Published by the National Christian Council of China, Shanghai.

the Kuomintang organization, a department being organized within the party to take charge of the unions. By the middle of 1925 a congress of union representatives was held at which it was reported that there were two hundred thousand members in Kwangtung Province alone and by the next year there were supposed to have been more than six hundred thousand, which may or may not have been true. From Kwangtung the movement spread to other provinces, finally reaching Central China.

The aims and policies of the unions were never very clearly stated or even worked out. There was discontent among the peasantry, arising in part out of their naturally hard lot in a country with too little food for the number of people and in part out of undoubted oppression and exploitation by the land-owning and money-lending gentry. Appeals to them to better their lot, even if not very concrete as to ways and means, found ready assent. The peasants joined and then read their own interpretation into what betterment implied. This was either reduction in rent on their land or in interest on their loans or just vengeance on those against whom they cherished a grievance. Before the unions were strong enough to become actually aggressive there is no doubt that they were able to redress a number of wrongs, but in the general upheaval of those years it was only to be expected that the movement would get out of hand and the peasants take to direct action. The propaganda of the communists and left wing agitators, who saw in the peasants their most promising raw material, did not serve as a restraint. In Hunan Province, for instance, where the peasants got

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most completely out of hand, they proceeded to repudiate loans and in some cases to expropriate the possessions of the gentry. The latter fled. When the time came to plant again, there was no one to whom the peasants could go for help as usual. They could get no loans, they could not carry themselves and they had no recourse except to loot. The surplus stocks of rice held in granaries owned by the rich had long been seized. The peasants ran amuck, as much out of need and desperation as wantonness, and a terror settled down on Hunan Province until the Kuo-mintang officials had to take measures of repression. Then, when the reaction against communism and everything allied with it set in, there was butchery. The net result to the peasants was increased suffering, if not death.

The peasant has genuine grievances. A great many of them grow out of natural conditions—over-population, insufficient production, flood and drought. Many more are caused by exploitation. As a general fact this is recognized. It is self-evident on casual observation. But of specific facts there are even fewer than on the situation in industry, and there has been an incredible amount of loose talk. In certain parts of the country, especially in the South, there is land-hunger, though scarcely to the same degree as in Russia and Eastern Europe. In the North, however, most farmers own their land, and there are few large estates. Where the farmer rents his land, the rent, whether paid in cash or percentage of crop, is generally exorbitant, but with regard to this there has also been a great deal of exaggeration. There are regions where fifty per cent of the crop is the normal rent, with sometimes a

higher percentage. There are also regions where it is lower.

Research into these questions has only now begun, and until it yields enough reliable information all statements must be made with reservation. According to statistical tables prepared by the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce in Peking in 1919, 59 per cent of the land is farmed by owners, 18 per cent by part-owners and 23 per cent by tenants; but government statistics in China are not always scientifically gathered or checked. A review of such studies as have been made shows considerable variation.⁶ One survey in North China showed 73 per cent owners, 14 per cent part-owners and 13 per cent tenants. One for East Central China showed 53 per cent owners, 21 per cent part-owners and 26 per cent tenants. Another in Shantung Province gives 77 per cent owners, 12 per cent part-owners and 11 per cent tenants. Five different surveys in Kiangsu Province alone showed as wide a variation as from 8 to 50 per cent of farmers owning their land and from 27 per cent to 78 per cent renting. In the South the proportion of renters would undoubtedly be larger, but no systematic surveys have been made or published. There is the same lack of data with regard to rents, but here it may be accepted that there have been abuses. These arise most frequently where there is absentee landlordism and agents are appointed as rent collectors and general managers of estates. It is an arrangement that lends itself easily to abuses everywhere in the

⁶ Buck, J. Lossing, *Farm Ownership and Tenancy in China*. Published by National Christian Council of China, Shanghai.

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world. Clearly some external agency must intervene to redress the wrongs of the peasants or they must organize for their protection and defend themselves in class conflict as factory workers do. Clearly, in some parts of the country economic distress has made land drift into too few hands, and certainly the conditions on which land is rented and money lent to peasants by the gentry are oppressive. The choice here, too, is between social intervention and control on the one hand and class struggle as the alternative to serfdom on the other. China is now and will remain for long an agricultural country, and talk of reconstruction is empty until more attention is given to the agrarian problem.

The winds of revolutionary doctrine have blown gustily over China these last few years but have leveled very little. So far as practice is concerned, all is as it was before. The subversion which has succeeded in overturning what stood had other inspiration. It would have worked to the same purpose had the Chinese remained placidly loyal to the social and economic beliefs handed down by the Confucian revisionists of the twelfth century. There has been revolution, and social revolution; but it was not of the kind that disturbed the relation of the classes or the status of private property or the theory that possession confers power in its own right. Thus far, those are merely being transferred to a new category, to the new order being taken over from the West. The revolutionary ferment of these years—using the word revolution in its connotations of radicalism, or that which affects the relations of the classes—has left very little sediment. That

which stirs certain elements in the cities and among students now is negative; it is discontent rather than revolutionary program. Among the peasants it is resentment and despair.

The government and the elements which it represents may wear the mantle of Sun Yat-sen and the *San Min Chu I*, but except for official ceremonials of adoration for the one and a passing glance and occasional magniloquent phrase for the other, both are forgotten. Certainly no serious attempt is being made to implement the doctrine which Dr. Sun enunciated in the *San Min Chu I*. Nor is there convincing evidence that any is to be expected. To be sure, under the conditions which have existed since 1927, very little could have been achieved, but declarations of intention could have been made and plans formulated. Concretely, a factory law and a land law have been drafted; that is all. No effort has been made to enforce them, of course; probably it could not succeed at present if it were made.

The land law follows in outline the principle laid down by Dr. Sun, which aimed at ultimate equalization of land ownership and reversion to the government of all unearned increment on land. A tax would be levied on all land according to the valuation set by the owner, but the government would reserve to itself the right to buy the land at the owner's own valuation. Thus there would be a check on undervaluation to escape taxation and at the same time the government could, when desired, buy land at its true economic value. Also there would be a tax on unearned increment arising from industrial development,

shifting of population or social improvement, the tax being low at the beginning and then graduated upward until the full 100 per cent of the unearned increment accrues to the government. If the benefits of China's social and economic transformation are not to go to shrewd speculators or to those who are simply lucky, then some such law must be applied and enforced; but whether it can be is doubtful and whether any serious attempt will be made is still more doubtful.

The factory law is loosely and inexpertly drawn, with holes through which a moderately clever corporation lawyer can pull a steel mill. The outstanding provision concerns the distribution of profit in a factory, which is defined to mean any commercial enterprise employing more than thirty workers. According to this provision, 10 per cent of net profit, after deductions are made for reserve fund, go to management and directors, 45 per cent to shareholders and 45 per cent to workers. All factories must be registered with the government. In every factory there must be a Works Council with equal representation of employers and workers, the latter choosing their own representatives. The Councils will settle disputes between workers and employers and among workers themselves and be empowered to make proposals for improvement of factory conditions. The right of dismissal is stringently regulated, one month's notice being stipulated. In case of summary dismissal for cause, one month's pay must be given. The regular working day is fixed at eight hours, with extension only by government permission. Night work for women is prohibited. Child labor is prohibited

in factories, and those between fourteen and sixteen years of age shall engage only in light, easy work, which is not defined. A compulsory rest of eighteen hours a week is specified. Minimum wage shall be fixed by computing an index of the cost of living for each locality. Factories must provide youthful workers and apprentices with educational and recreational facilities at the expense of the factories. Also they must pay a pension. The Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Labor is empowered to maintain a staff for inspection of all factories. No means of enforcement are provided, especially with regard to the division of profits. Nor are there definitions of profit nor specifications of methods of accounting. Failing those, it is predictable that a clever set of accountants will produce an annual report showing very little profit available for division, if any. This law may or may not be workable, but in any case it stands at present as so many words on paper.

If these and similar limitations are to be set on capital, then clearly the development of industry will be retarded. But the question may be asked whether that would be necessarily calamitous, whether it would not, in fact, be beneficial. Too precipitate a development of industry would entail immeasurable misery for the Chinese people, already in the depths. Every new factory deprives hundreds, perhaps thousands, of the means of livelihood. Labor-saving devices in a country already overpopulated work two ways. They increase production, but the advantages are passed on down in very small measure to those who have been deprived of everything by the saving of

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labor. Until there is complete mechanization and new demands for labor are created, there is a pit between the two systems of production into which a certain proportion of the population must fall. The slower the pace of mechanization, the more easily is the adjustment made and the narrower the pit.

The question is also to be asked whether, regardless of such considerations, those who stand to gain by seizing the first opportunities in industrialization will be willing to adapt their pace to social welfare unless forced. This cannot be answered by China alone. Here the attitude of the foreign Powers and foreign financial interests enters. In the first place, foreign capital is now strongly entrenched in China in banks, factories and trading houses, principally in the settlements and territorial concessions and mostly in Shanghai. It is in Shanghai also, under foreign jurisdiction, that industry has gone furthest. To attempt to impose control of any kind without reference to Shanghai is useless. Unless, therefore, China recovers Shanghai or the international régime there adopts the same legislation, China's hands are tied. Otherwise the Chinese manufacturer on Chinese soil could not compete. What would happen is that Chinese capital would be driven to Shanghai. That the international régime at Shanghai will indulge in any voluntary renunciation of profit is not worth discussing. The recovery of Shanghai by China is more nearly likely, though hardly in the immediate future.

More is at stake for foreign interests than the prosperity of investments already placed in China. For years

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Western capital has been straining to leap at the opportunities offered by exploitation of China's resources, the construction of its railways and harbors and the supplying of its huge market for goods. In fact, the intensive industrialization of China will not be possible without the assistance of foreign capital. Will foreign capital accept the restrictions implied by any constructive social control, even so much limitation as is set by the factory law just outlined? If not, will it invoke the principle that every government stands behind every dollar invested abroad by its rich citizens and use the influence of its governments and the bargaining power of capital to overthrow such a régime or quietly nullify its regulations—having in mind that China, unlike Soviet Russia, will for long be too weak to resist concentrated pressure? Or, if profits in China are reduced and cost of production increased by extra social charges, will China be able to compete in the world market? Will Chinese industry be able to compete even in its own market against imported goods—goods produced with the economies of indifference to social welfare? Domestic politics and foreign relations still hang over every question in China, however remote.

An integral part of the new economic and social dispensation is an educational system. Without more general education there can be no new dispensation. In part, this has been under way since the old system was definitively abandoned in 1905. It has not gone very far because of financial limitations, disorganization in government and civil wars. As has been said already, more attention has been paid to system than to education. The problem of a

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philosophy of education, of an adjustment of the new to the old, has scarcely been touched. Where cognizance is taken at all, it is only by way of scorn for the old. Thus far, there has been slavish imitation of the West. Nevertheless, rapid strides were being made before there was a general collapse.

In 1911 the Ministry of Education of the Peking Government reported that the previous year there were 52,650 modern schools, including normal, industrial and technical schools, with a teaching body of 89,766 and 1,625,534 students.⁷ The Ministry's figures showing the progress made in the previous five years are illustrative of what might have been had the revolution not come:

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS

	<i>Government</i>	<i>Public</i>	<i>Private</i>	<i>Total</i>
1905.....	3,605	393	224	4,222
1907.....	5,224	12,310	2,296	19,830
1909.....	12,888	25,688	4,512	43,086
1910.....	14,301	32,254	5,793	52,348

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

1903.....	1,274
1904.....	31,378
1905.....	102,767
1906.....	200,401
1907.....	547,064
1908.....	921,020
1909.....	1,301,168
1910.....	1,625,534

By 1916 this number had almost tripled, according to official figures in the report of the Ministry of Education

⁷ Quoted by P. W. Kuo, *The Chinese System of Public Education*.

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for 1917.⁸ These showed the following totals, classified in grade of schools:

<i>School</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>
Lower Primary	3,551,099	149,505
Higher Primary	367,629	14,729
Other Primary	49,850	3,254
Middle School	116,994	9,461
Higher School	27,730	
Total	4,113,302	176,949
Total Boys and Girls		4,290,251

Unofficial figures for 1923 estimated the number of children in government schools at 6,500,000. Since then such figures as have been gathered cannot be taken as reliable. Probably the total has shrunk considerably. In this period there has emerged also what is known as the Mass Education movement, which, although being made far too much of a show-piece for foreign eyes, has nevertheless exercised a measure of influence and is an illustration of what might be done. It is a movement to combat illiteracy and owes its origin to the enthusiasm of a Chinese Y.M.C.A. secretary with the Chinese Labor Corps in France during the world war. There he established classes in reading and writing and was encouraged by the results to recommend to the Chinese Y.M.C.A. on his return to China that the same might be attempted at home. After a period of investigation and research a thousand-character textbook was worked out for use with adult classes. Then a technique of promotion was devised. About the latter there was a good deal of evangelical proselyting

⁸ Quoted by Sidney Gamble, *Peking, A Social Survey*.

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and a good deal of American boosterism with a campaign culminating skillfully in a crescendo of emotional appeal. Partly because this is so new to the Chinese and partly because the appeal was so irresistible—the hunger for learning has not dulled—the campaign was startlingly successful. The support of officials and businessmen was enlisted and peasants, artisans and small shopkeepers flocked to classes. The first formal association was organized in Hunan Province and by 1924 the enrollment was 150,000. From there it spread, with equal success. Two short courses were given every year, consisting mainly of reading and writing but including something of what might be called citizenship training and something of vocational training. By the time the Association was well started, however, the Nationalist revolution and the communist movement and the upheaval they produced made further efforts impossible, although the idea has carried on in many localities of its own momentum. There has been a tendency to make too much of the mass education movement in the United States. Much of what has been written about it in the United States smacks of gush. It commends itself easily to the reformist mentality, to the type of mind that runs to solutions by mechanical device, especially if the device has emotional content. There is a tendency to see China's salvation by mass education, as once by the republic, by the student movement, by the merchants' movement, by any of the other movements so enthusiastically celebrated in foreign books and magazines. An industrial China needs to be literate, and by so much, mass education is good. But at the rate at

which education can be carried on by a private body a hundred years will be insufficient to make the Chinese people literate. But suppose by a miracle it could be accomplished in one year—then what? The American people have been literate for almost a hundred years—and then what?

The mass education movement must be seen in its proper proportions. It is only a phase of the broader question of education. There must be a system of state schools to provide instruction for all of the four hundred million people. But even this is only a minor phase. The basic question of education for China is—What is education? China must work out a new philosophy of education, expressed in content which shall be consonant with the demands of the new time and yet be indigenous to the Chinese spirit. Its education must again become the vehicle of its culture and the distillate of its belief. But this in turn raises the question as to what China's culture will be, and to this no answer can be given. Its culture, as its new moral values, will be shaped by its new way of life, not consciously but unconsciously, as the rôle of the family, the position of women and the institution of marriage already have been modified by material considerations and new ideas. What mutual interaction there will be, if any, between the new way of life and the old, and how this will manifest itself culturally are matters for conjecture. They open up tempting fields for speculation, but no more. The answer must be revealed in the event.

CHAPTER XIII

CHINA AND THE WEST: DEVOLUTION

THE part of the Western world in determining the future of China has been scaled down almost beyond recognition in the last decade. So great has been the reduction as to constitute a pronounced swing in history and to recast the balance in international relations. In 1900 there appeared to be little prospect of China's survival as an independent nation. The only question appeared to be which Power would get the lion's share and whether the division would be decided by war or diplomatic arrangement. By the time the world war began China had become a republic and was less supine, but yet there was no other prospect than a long period of continued domination by the Western world and Japan, with partition always an overhanging threat. Today for all practical purposes China has recovered sovereignty. It is not actually, literally independent, for there are still derogations on its sovereignty to which no independent nation submits. But so much has already been regained and so strongly is the tide running that unless China is torn asunder by its own centrifugal forces it is almost astronomically certain that the whole complex of foreign privilege, special position and entrenchment on domestic concerns will be wiped out.

In the five years since 1925 the great Powers have lost

nearly all they had gained since 1842 by aggression, invasion, threat and chicane. They have forfeited the right to fix China's tariff, with the power that it gave to throttle the development of China's industry and deprive the government of funds for strengthening the country's defenses. The Powers have been compelled against their will to grant tariff autonomy. China simply took it, after which the Powers ratified the *fait accompli* by signing new commercial treaties. Extra-territoriality is at the time of writing in an indeterminate state. By official proclamation of the Nationalist government on January 1, 1930, it has been abrogated, but the great Powers refuse to recognize China's unilateral act and still claim extra-territorial rights for their citizens. The issue is purely academic. Extra-territoriality had been nullified in practice before 1930. The immunity from Chinese jurisdiction which it is supposed to confer had already been lost, in fact if not in law. The Chinese were simply taking jurisdiction. They are taking it now except in the small areas still governed by foreigners. An American who leaves the settlements and concessions where there are foreign police submits to Chinese jurisdiction; he has to. When confronted by a squad of Chinese soldiers with bayonets fixed, what will it avail him to quote the cogent legal arguments of Secretary of State Stimson? The commander of the squad will not have heard of Mr. Stimson or, if he has, care. When Mr. Stimson in his official note proclaimed to the world and to China that the American government could not renounce extra-territoriality and then with inexplicable indiscretion added that the Amer-

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ican government would protect the extra-territorial rights of its citizens, he did not, unfortunately, specify just how it would do so without sending the United States Marine Corps. In fact, it cannot do so, as the Americans in China and the Chinese are well aware. What happens therefore is that an American in the interior of China submits. What does it matter to him that the Department of State is resolute on Pennsylvania Avenue, six thousand miles away? For him extra-territoriality is gone. Treaties or no treaties, extra-territoriality in the reality which an American resident of China must face every day is cancelled, except in localities like Peking, Shanghai or Tientsin where there are foreign troops; and there it is not needed.

With the exception of the British Concession in Hankow, the Belgian Concession in Tientsin and a few others of minor importance, which have been retroceded, the foreign concessions and settlements remain juridically in foreign possession, but their status has changed completely. To one who knew Shanghai in 1915 the Shanghai of 1930 is incredible. It is not only that the Chinese have won representation in the governing bodies of Shanghai and other alienated areas, although this alone would have been a revolutionary thought ten years ago; but they have also won regard for their interests and respect for their opinions. They are no longer dealt with cavalierly as before, nor are they so contemptuously ignored. They cannot be. They are too strong. By penetration here and attrition there they are insinuating themselves into power and pinching out the foreigner. It is not so much a matter of act as of atmosphere. The Chi-

nese is no longer the underdog. And it is as the reading of a chart to say that the years of foreign control of the concessions are numbered and quickly counted. For a time it may be as with extra-territoriality. Shanghai will be nominally foreign, but everything in it worth owning will be Chinese-owned and every decision on anything vital will be made by Chinese. As for the right to station troops on Chinese soil and gunboats on the inland waters, the same may be said as for concessions and settlements. The Chinese Customs and Salt Gabelle—the national monopoly—are still administered by foreign citizens, but now not as autonomous organs, accepting orders, if at all, from the Legations in Peking. Now they are subordinate departments of the Chinese government, subject to the orders of Nanking, orders which the foreign executives, now no longer dictators, meekly obey—a fact which yields a certain amusement to those with a sense for comedy and a memory that reaches back ten years. In conclusion, the whole system of treaties which bound fetters on China for almost a hundred years is being abolished, in fact, if not in diplomatic formality.

The outstanding infringement on Chinese sovereignty still far from liquidation is in South Manchuria, where the Japanese retain the leasehold on the Kwantung Peninsula and the ownership of the South Manchuria Railway, with the quasi-political control which that confers. There is not a remote likelihood that Japan will give up its position in South Manchuria unless driven out by force. The likelihood that China will be strong enough to do so for decades is even more remote. There remains only the pos-

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sibility that Japan will be defeated in a war with some third Power, but in that event Manchuria will not revert to China anyway but go to the victor as spoils. If China is to wrest the Manchurian provinces from Japan it must do so with some other weapon. It is already forging one, one which has been turned against itself in the past. This is economic penetration.

The Manchurian provinces are no longer unsettled land. They are being populated, but not by Japanese. Japan, with all its official apologetics for expansion to make room for its surplus population, has sent to Manchuria only 200,000 of its subjects. From the crowded provinces of North China from two to five times that number of Chinese have emigrated into Manchuria every year in the last five years,¹ and Manchuria is fast becoming Chinese in race. The Chinese have always crowded out or absorbed their conquerors and the weight of the Chinese mass is beginning to tell in Manchuria, too. Now, however, the mass is being more effectively deployed than in olden times; it is not just inert mass. China is building its own railways in Manchuria and planning them so that they will break the monopoly of the Japanese South Manchuria Railway by drawing Manchurian products into China's economic machine. Chinese are establishing banks, mills, factories and commercial houses. They have always been able to drive out all other competitors in small trading wherever they have gone. Now they are learning the methods of big business. And in Manchuria they have the

¹ Cf. articles on Manchuria in Problems of the Pacific, proceedings of the third conference of Institute of Pacific Relations, 1929.

advantage of being on their own soil and dealing with their own people. In Manchuria the Chinese are applying in their own interest the rule which has heretofore operated against themselves, the rule which governs international relations in the twentieth century. The rule is, let any flag fly over a territory that may, he who owns the resources of the territory is its master. A slow encircling movement has begun in South Manchuria. Not for long will it have closed in. But it proceeds with the irresistible force of gravity, and when it is consummated the Japanese will find themselves choked out. They are already feeling the pressure, wherefore recent Sino-Japanese incidents and the so-called "strong policy" advocated by the Japanese military party. This policy is to cast off diplomatic fictions and make South Manchuria integrally Japanese territory. But to accomplish this something more than an army and a government policy is necessary. Only something that can withstand the glacial movement of the Chinese population and at the same time paralyze its economic power will serve.

Many causes have been assigned to the dramatic turn which has resulted in the casting off of foreign domination in China—missionary influence, Russian propaganda, Chinese ingratitude, Chinese wrong-headedness, the "weakness" of foreign governments and the like. These are all superficial. There is only one cause—history. The conquest of China followed from the inexorable logic of history. The industrial revolution made Western expansion necessary; the machine needed raw material to work on and then an outlet for its product. Also the industrial

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revolution made conquest possible; the machine made fast ships and high-power guns, and gave the West range and speed and invincible might such as men had not known before. From the same logic follows the undoing of conquest. The fastening of Western dominance over China was the product of its time; so also is the dramatic turn the product of its time.

The expansion of the West by means of the machine carried more than ships and guns and diplomats and ultimatums and cheap manufactured products. It also brought ideas and influences. These, as we have seen, have been as disruptive to China as the guns and ultimatums. They have been equally disruptive of the foreign position in China. What were these ideas? What are the ideas most characteristic of the West in the nineteenth century? Nationalism; conscious patriotism; democracy. The easy communications resulting from the achievements of the machine age would have given these ideas currency by natural momentum. What we did was disseminate them more quickly and more widely. We established our foreign cities in China, each one a radiating center. We opened schools at which our ideas were taught. We encouraged Chinese, as well as other Asiatics of every kind and color, to come to our own schools and universities. Now, we were not altogether naïve and blind. There were many who were far-sighted and deprecated "putting notions in the heads" of natives; and they were quite right. The notions have now exploded under us. But even the far-sighted could not very well help themselves. For our adventures in conquest were costly, both in men and

money. They were also highly profitable, it is true, but the profits did not go to those who paid the cost. The latter, who made up the bulk of the population, had to be convinced that the cost was justified. How? By the lofty conception that we were fulfilling a noble duty: we were uplifting the downtrodden, or, as we preferred to say, carrying civilization into outer darkness. It was, in the exquisite phrase subsequently sanctified, the white man's burden. We were taking on ourselves the trusteeship of what Mr. Rudyard Kipling, laureate of the imperialistic upstart on the make, so magisterially called the lesser breed. Now, since that was our justification to the masses for spending the money they paid out in taxes, we could not very well restrain those who took the justification seriously. There were in the conquering countries persons of sensibility who gagged at the opium trade, at bullying, at grabbing, at the higher hucksterism of concessioning and the elevated chicanery of imperialistic finance. They could reconcile themselves to what they recognized as essentially a dirty business only by the thought that we really were bearing to less fortunate nations the benefits of our more materially advanced civilizations in compensation for exploitation—as in a measure we were. How, then, could we restrain them when they wished to establish schools, newspapers, hospitals, and missions and thus plant the seeds of our own undoing? To have restrained them would have exposed the falsity of our professions and unclothed our motives in their nakedness as acquisitiveness pressed with merciless greed, heedless of its victims wherever nations were not strong

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enough to resist us. So we established schools and universities and newspaper presses and so forth; and built railways and installed telegraph lines and other means of communication because they were highly profitable, thus providing more convenient channels for the spread of ideas. We succeeded, and this is the fruit of our success. Not only China but all the other of what we so complacently called the backward peoples have acquired national consciousness and are stirred by conscious patriotism. Being nationally conscious and patriotic, could they be expected to remain supinely in subjection?

They have not even had to. For a long time China was submissive because it was cowed. Resistance seemed futile against an enemy endowed with the qualities of supermen. A diplomat presented his genteely couched ultimatum demanding a concession to build a railway on terms which would give his country a death-grip on three provinces and incidentally bind China to buy the materials at a price fixed by the seller without competitive bidding. China hesitated. The diplomat pounded the table. China wavered but did not yield. The diplomat sent a few words on wires and a line of metal-clad ships drew majestically off the coast ready to pound a city to dust. China signed. What hope was there in resisting a race commanding supermundane power? The white race was evidently favored of God, ordained to rule the earth. Then there supervened a shocking revelation. The Russo-Japanese war was fought and for the first time in the memory of non-white man a powerful white nation was humbled by one of another color, and that one a small

island people only recently elevated from obscurity. Plainly the Divinity was neutral, and success was to the strong. Even those not white could be strong, if they but took thought. A thrill ran through the whole East, a thrill which has not yet subsided. It quickened the East and gave it esprit. And the power and pomp and position of the West will never again in our era be what they were before.

Then came the world war, and a chapter in history began to draw to its close. The world war foreshortened all movements everywhere. In the East it telescoped. All the subversive ideas which had been working at the foundations in what might be called a natural course were accentuated, accelerated and driven home. The example of the war itself was enough to disenchant all those who still clung to inner beliefs of white superiority. And we pointed the lesson. Where we could not fight with weapons we fought with propaganda. Each side blackened the other, and so much of what both said was palpably true that a neutral like a Chinese—or a Hindu—drew the too obvious conclusion about both. But more fatal was the Messianic propaganda. It may still be remembered that the Allies, who unfortunately were compelled to let Mr. Wilson serve as their spokesman, were fighting for a new and purer dispensation. Concretely, they were to fashion a world on principles of universal democracy, the rights of weak nations and small nations, self-determination and justice for all, including those without prodigious armaments. To a nation like China, which was weak, which had suffered from injustice and brutality and which had

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lost all voice in the determination of its destiny, the promise was intoxicating. China, as it happened, rallied to Mr. Wilson's cry and joined the Allies—and then, as has already been said, found that at the same time one of its provinces had secretly been bartered away to another Ally. But in all the backward nations in subjection to the Powers Mr. Wilson's program kindled a resolve and sharpened an appetite. When the Allies won and the appetite was left unappeased, there was kindled a flaming resentment and a resolve of another kind.

The war was also a demonstration. It was further proof of the terrestrial stuff of the white man. In our heedlessness we took Chinese, Hindus, Africans, Arabs and showed them how to kill white men. We taught them that a gun held in a yellow or brown or black hand could dispatch a white man as effectively as any other if fired straight. That lesson sank in, too. In China we gave a more pointed demonstration. The Chinese were hounded to deport the Germans who had been residing and doing business there—although the war was six months over, thus providing an incidental lesson in white chivalry. The Chinese, who had been taught by painful experience—the murder of two German missionaries had cost half a province only twenty years before, it will be remembered—that by the first principle of white solidarity and white prestige all white men would combine to punish any slight against a white man by a “native”—the Chinese hesitated. But they were persuaded, and finally acceded. The Germans were herded together and expelled, and thus again it was demonstrated that a white man could

be dealt with as any other if one were only strong enough.

The most incisive demonstration of the war came later. It was soon recognized that the West had been left spent, and that the Powers did not have the means nor their people the inclination for punitive expeditions in distant parts. It was made glaringly obvious to the Chinese. At the Versailles peace conference and again at the Washington conference China asked for some relaxation of foreign control, for a measure of restoration of its sovereign rights. It was answered patronizingly and told to run along home and set its house in order and the Powers were its friends. But the lessons of the times were sinking in, and the Chinese were losing their submissiveness. They became self-assertive and exigent. They made demands, and then took. One incident after another of the kind which twenty years before would have brought gunboats and Draconian punishment passed off with diplomatic protests. The Chinese became emboldened. The sacred law of the treaties was violated in one way, then another. The Powers protested; their protests became a matter of Peking routine. Then the nationalistic, anti-imperialistic wave swept the country. There was the incident of May 30, 1925, when Chinese students were shot down by foreign police in Shanghai. The country erupted.

That day marked a period in the relations of China and the West. All restraints were removed. Treaties were contemptuously flouted, foreigners were subjected to violence, foreign gunboats were fired on in the Yangtze, there was no derogation on foreign dignity which was not committed and suffered. Now it was the lordly white

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man who was supine. A small force was sent to Shanghai for defense, but it behaved with circumspection. There was no intervention, and from that point the sacred "prestige of the white race," a phrase at which all the East had been taught to bow the head, disappeared. The Powers did not intervene. Neither did they have the insight or wisdom quickly to offer concessions with seeming good grace, as if of their own volition. Had they offered a little, they might still have saved the rest. They neither resisted nor made a compromise. But by doing nothing they proved just as conclusively that they were helpless as if they had openly retreated. In the latter case they might even have earned good will. As it was, they only showed China that it could act with impunity. And China has. It has abrogated treaties, cancelled foreign rights, taxed foreigners and their goods, encroached on foreign territory, imposed restrictions on foreigners; it has also at times acted unjustly, unfairly and abusively.

The white man's prestige is no more. Most of all, China has recovered a sense of equality. Its morale is restored. It has self-respect again. For this was the greatest affront that it had suffered: not the seizure of territory, not infringement on its sovereign rights, not economic exploitation, but that which was not abstract and ideological but outraged its pride. This was the stigma of inferiority. Only one who knew the psychological atmosphere of the China coast ten years ago can understand what this means. The Chinese lived in a pale in his own country. A cultivated, elderly Chinese patrician was at all times subject to humiliation by a young sprig of a junior

clerk of the English or American middle classes. If he sought to enter a hotel in a foreign settlement by the front door, he could be ordered to go around and enter by the back door. He could not eat in the dining room of such a hotel if wearing Chinese clothes. In a bank he could be waited on only at a side counter. He could not enter a club frequented by white sales managers except as a servant. He was excluded from public parks in the foreign ports. His wants were attended to in a public place or public conveyance only after every white man was served. In a shop he could see a Chinese clerk's face slapped by a white man for a trivial mistake. On the street he could see his countrymen shoved off the sidewalk because they do not rush. He was a pariah, and he was made to feel his lowly estate every day and to taste its bitterness to the full. It was this that sharpened the edge of passion on the cry of anti-imperialism, this and not extra-territoriality and tariff control and the like, for this touched the Chinese intimately. It robbed them of self-respect.

All that is gone. If anything, now there is the reverse. The foreigner for his part is judicious, courteous and forbearing. As for the Chinese, having won equality they are now bent on proving it, not only to those who before had denied it them but to themselves. Still insecure in it and self-conscious in its exercise, they must bolster up their self-confidence. This they can do most convincingly by acting to the foreigner as he used to act to them. So they are acting, and if they derive therefrom a comforting satisfaction, that is but human and therefore understandable. To tax a foreigner, especially if the tax be

somewhat outside the bounds of strict legality; to close the mails to his newspaper; to cause arbitrary delay on the shipment of his goods or confiscate his property or examine his records with the maximum of inconvenience to himself; and to have the power to do so, and make him feel it, and to feel oneself that one has it—that is sweet consolation for cumulative resentment. It is human, but naturally unpleasant to the foreigner. The Chinese are now exercising power over the foreigner for power's sake. Until the novelty has dulled and the satisfaction of paying off old accounts palls, life for a foreigner in China will not be agreeable. Conducting business in China will not be easy.

A chapter in history has closed. Our day in China is done. It is not an unmixed evil. Instead, it may be the saving of the Western world. Internally China is shattered. Were China still cowed and supine as it was thirty years ago or had the state of China been thirty years ago as it is now, the great Powers would have moved to partition. They would have intrigued and combined against each other, competitively grasped, and leaped at each other's throats. The end would have been war, with all sides lying prostrate amid China's ruins. Now the predacious instincts of the Powers have been restrained, not so much by their own war-weariness as by China's intransigence. China may be torn within by civil war but against the outsider it would unite, and it has learned enough about modern warfare to make conquest far from the easy adventure it once was. The white man's dominance of China was established by force, it rested on force and

it has passed because the great Powers no longer have a sufficient preponderance of force. When the West has recovered from the world war it may renew its attack, but by that time it is equally likely that China will no longer be vulnerable. Or, some new technique of penetration and mastery may be evolved, perhaps by investments and with directors filling the former rôles of generals, admirals and diplomats. But the old form of imperialism, as far as China is concerned, has fallen of its own weight.

What of the relations between China and the West now? They will, for the present, scale down to the economic, mainly commercial—that is, the relations of buyer and seller. But even in these deflated proportions they will not be easy to maintain without friction. They are just now fraught with difficulty, perplexity and irritation. There is, for one thing, the impediment of civil war. The expansion of foreign trade which could have been looked for as a continuation of the rise in the curve in recent years has not materialized. The curve is flattening. Transportation is too difficult to develop markets in the interior. Buying power has been reduced. The machinery of distribution has been disorganized. New Chinese business is lacking in the tradition of honesty that governed the old. There are too many mushroom concerns. Extension of credit is risky. The upheaval which prevails everywhere makes for laxity. The orgy of taxation which every local authority permits itself is, of course, paralyzing. Not the increase in taxation but its uncertainty makes the conduct of business impossible. No firm knows at the beginning of an operation how much duty will be levied on it before it

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is consummated. Only in the foreign concessions is there any regularity. There is little prospect of these conditions improving materially in the near future. In the meantime foreign trade, like Chinese trade, will suffer heavily.

To the insecurity which is inevitable in the circumstances must be added the special difficulties of the adjustment which foreign business must make. All foreign business in China has been organized on the basis of autonomy, of independence from all Chinese regulation or supervision or taxation. This the Chinese are determined to end. Much of their present interference can be explained by their desire to demonstrate that foreign business in the future will be subject to the laws and administrative control of the country on exactly the same plane as Chinese, at the best. The Chinese are determined, further, by a kind of internal protective system to give preference to their own enterprises. Already subtle penalties are being laid on the foreigner. Finally, Chinese competition has arisen to challenge foreign business in such a way as to threaten its extinction in its present form and kind.

A clear line of differentiation must be drawn between foreign business *in* China and foreign business *with* China. It is the former which is most articulate and makes itself most vociferously heard from, the former also that has been the most importunate in demand for "action" by the foreign governments. This cry has less to do with the preservation of Western interests in the larger sense than with the protection of the vested interests of a few firms in Shanghai, Hankow and Tientsin. To this source may be traced the most passionate demands for intervention.

The British or American businessman resents his reduction from demigod with a handsome profit. Insulated in the provincialism of the outports, where he has been less touched by the movements of his generation than a Chinese student, he is still unaware that the world has changed since 1918. At the refusal of his governments to send punitive expeditions and bombard a town because his profit and loss account is unhealthy he voices the anguished cry, thou betrayest me.

The foreign businessman in China is the unhappy victim of his times. In the main his business has been that of middleman, or else he has conducted the kind of enterprise that the Chinese had not yet learned how to conduct. But the Chinese are now learning. They have discovered that they can just as well buy looms and spindles and printing presses in the United States, Germany or England themselves and save themselves the commission heretofore paid to the Shanghai sales agent. They know that there is nothing mystic or esoteric in the process. International exchange operations also can be performed by a Chinese as well as a Scotsman. They are even conducting their own department stores. Foreign business in China—not foreign business with China—is doomed. It will go the way of foreign business in Japan and for the same reason. It will be done by Chinese themselves. That does not mean, however, that England, Germany, the United States and Japan will necessarily sell less to China. It matters little to the Chicago manufacturer whether he bills his goods direct to a Chinese mill in Hankow or to an American importing agent in Shang-

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hai. His concern is in selling the goods. And from the point of view of the prosperity of American trade that alone matters.

The readjustment in the management of our trade with China will not involve a loss if the Chinese can themselves devise and operate machinery of distribution such as our own citizens have managed heretofore. There is no reason to doubt that they will be able to in time, but there is also evidence that they cannot now. In the meantime our own representatives must carry on under a disability and our trade suffer. There are, thus, two handicaps against which foreign trade must contend. First, there is this readjustment. Second, there is the uncertainty that even if the Chinese are able to manage the machinery of foreign trade they will be able to make any progress in the conditions of upheaval which now obtain—disorder, obstruction of communications, insecurity of property, oppressive and capricious taxation and government interference. The chances are they will not. The concrete question is whether foreign trade will be able to carry itself through the transition or have to be written off for a period. More likely it will be the latter. Then the question arises whether Europe, the United States and Japan can face writing off the China trade at a time when there is a world-wide depression because of the already existing dislocation of world markets. It is not a matter of whether business can be done at a profit, but whether it can be done at all, just to keep goods moving and our own industrial machinery running and our own workers employed. In the struggle for world business which is now

going into full swing—a struggle not for expansion but for survival—it will take a high degree of resoluteness and forbearance to watch one market fall away entirely.

For years the promise of the opening of the Chinese market to its full capacity of absorption has been held out to the already industrialized nations. Occidental and Japanese energies have been tensed to spring at the opportunities of developing the Chinese market and then supplying it. This was the prize for which we have angled in the Far East. This was the stake of imperialism. Had we played for it with less of the tactic of the dog-in-the-manger and less avarice we might have won it collectively and shared the return. Even so late as 1918 Dr. Sun Yat-sen's plan for reconstruction was premised on foreign financial assistance, as shown by the very title of his book, *The International Development of China*. Foreign capital, foreign technical guidance and foreign management during the period of tutelage and transition would have yielded high direct profit and kept the wheels of foreign industry turning for a generation or two. It might even have served as a brake on China's descent into its present slough. But this presupposed an international pooling of money and effort and purpose, with mutual good faith between the pooling nations and collective good faith toward China. A mere glance at China's foreign affairs since 1842 shows the fantasy in such a hypothesis. Instead, the nations each pressed their exclusive ambitions, their attention equally divided between exploiting for themselves and frustrating the exploitation of every rival Power. Collectively they looked on China only as a car-

cass to strip. Their motives became suspect and still are suspect. When the new international consortium was formed after the world war, with purposes which in the abstract were unimpeachable, all classes of Chinese steadfastly refused to have any dealing with it. They would refuse now. Old resentments must be appeased and old sores healed before there can be enough trust to accept economic direction and supervision from any one nation or all. International finance could still serve to speed the economic transformation, at the same time swelling our own trade balances, giving China a secure footing, enriching its own financial interests and elevating the standard of living of the Chinese masses. But first there would have to be assurance that there would be rigid separation between foreign economic and political interest, if that is possible. Second, there would have to be unexceptionable affirmative evidence that the Powers had abandoned exclusive national ambitions—more evidence than is to be found in international relations today.

Instead, therefore, we shall eke out what little we can from fragments of trade in a turmoil—a condition for which we are ourselves in large measure responsible. Meanwhile we may dwell ruefully on what might have been, and perhaps even bring ourselves to think of what might one day be if we can ever come to see the penny-wisdom of the acquisitiveness of the moment—especially in relations with the weak and materially undeveloped nations, which we call backward because they are materially undeveloped.

CHAPTER XIV

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSIONS are quickly stated. There are none. There are only questions. Except for the stuff of journalism, the reporting of day-to-day events, no statement can be made concerning China now that does not end in an interrogation point. The past can be understood; the present can be observed; the future can be conjectured—that is all.

The past can be understood, and that may be enough. Then the present can be seen in perspective and as a unity. It is revealed then as having cause, origin and organic connection, and as growing from roots that predetermined its kind and form. To look at China as it is in 1930 and scold, moralize or exhort is to berate rain or darkness or heat. The picture that China presents is shocking; but it could not be otherwise. To look at it and, without considering what gave it its composition, design, color and rhythm, dwell repetitively on its horrors—as our correspondents, experts, businessmen and diplomats almost uniformly do—is stupid or futile or both. One may properly feel pity or horror or awe, anything but blame. This is the working of fate: not so much fate in the sense of inscrutable, supernatural destiny or nature or the scheme of things as in the sense of the consequence of the way men order their society. All the forces of the

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last hundred years have marched irresistibly to the point at which China now finds itself. Causes have begotten effects and effects operated as causes in a grim sequence of which this is the end. And China is now paying, as we are, too, to the extent that our interests are bound up with China. The condition of China at present is inevitable, hence it is understandable. And there is little more to be said.

The oceans of ink spilled in angry, minatory exposures of the situation without its background are useless. They are also dangerous. They serve to mislead, to plant false convictions, to oversimplify into a complex of virtue and villainy, of lofty superiority and human dereliction, with China the villain and inferior, ourselves the taintless and superior, and the choice between chaos and correction. They also tempt to glib, superficial conclusions, of which the most banal and commonplace has been the need for international intervention. To make a case for intervention is supererogatory. There has already been intervention, almost a hundred years of it. The results have been disastrous enough. To go in officially now with military expeditions, civil occupations and a superimposed foreign régime would be to add one more engine of demolition. It would also be fruitless. To expect to "straighten out" China or "set its house in order" from without is as attempting to play traffic policeman to an earthquake. Fortunately the attempt will not be made. In Western financial and political capitals there is no disposition for it. There is general recognition that China's mood does not permit it, and that it could accomplish nothing in any

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case. Talk of intervention survives now mainly on the lower levels of journalism and among the lower ranks of small foreign businessmen and office clerks in China coast cities.

China will be left to itself. To what, is on the knees of the gods. To memory only, it may be. In all that is written or said of China's reconstruction the assumption seems to be implicit that it will succeed in reconstructing. The assumption is not altogether warranted. It is also possible that China has gone irrecoverably into decline, that it will hang for a long time in chaotic suspense, then settle into a number of principalities and a larger Balkanism, the different parts first drifting under the influence of a few larger states and then becoming absorbed by them. In that case the figure of the Balkans is appropriate, for the Chinese principalities will also be used as pieces in a game of world politics, ending as that game always ends, and there will yet be a world war in the Far East. All this is not beyond the bounds of possibility, although more improbable than probable. On the evidence discernible in 1930 it is quite credible. In recent years China has shown an extraordinary capacity for muddling its affairs, a barrenness of leadership, and an almost fatalistic instinct for aggravating its own misery. Not for a hundred years has there been any sign of statesmanship or of collective constructive ability. Its record of creative achievement in that time has been entirely negative. Not much of hopefulness is to be derived from China's later history. But as has already been pointed out, it was a period of fallowness in any case, without regard to external complications. It was

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the movement of descent in China's cycles. There have been such before and they have been followed by periods of reinvigoration and fruitfulness.

Assuming, however, that China is not to disappear as a national entity, then what? For better or worse and whatever their chances may be, the Chinese people are resolved to make themselves over, to put themselves into step with the modern world, to take advantage of the advancement in knowledge and progress in science, and this they can do only by patterning themselves on the West. The concrete step is industrialization and the concomitant social and economic transformation, and the test is whether they can industrialize, and how, and with what effect on themselves. They have already begun, and they could not retreat if they would. Their bridges are down behind them. If they fail, then nothing else matters. Then China is lost. Having merged itself into the twentieth century world, it must live by the terms of that world or go down entirely. Nothing can be said arbitrarily of the relative chances of success and failure, but in the light of the long-demonstrated and unquestionable aptitude of the Chinese people for commerce and finance, their ability to adjust themselves to the demands of business in every part of the world, their adaptability and resourcefulness, it is more likely than not that so far as the pure technique of production and distribution by machinery is concerned they will be able to master it, once they have made the necessary psychological adjustments and cast off the social obstructions. It is more reasonable to expect that they will have big factories, large-scale pro-

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duction, huge, thickly populated cities thrusting smoke-stacks into the heavens, centralized systems of distribution, standardization of commodities—and probably more than commodities—and simplification of the details of daily existence by mechanical labor-saving devices.

Successful industrialization will carry with it automatically a solution of numerous problems now apparently isolated and as such insoluble. One is the question of population. The Chinese have always bred up to food supply and over, largely in obedience to the motive of the perpetuation and glory of the family. There was a philosophy behind proliferation. But successful industrialization involves urbanization of a much larger proportion of the population and is dependent upon universal education. The combination always has one result—birth control. Living in industrial cities, with a high standard of living not only possible but desirable, with a higher level of education, access to medical knowledge and a greater familiarity with science, they will inevitably limit reproduction. The motive for overpopulation will be lacking, for as we have seen, the old family system must go, and is already going. Already the Chinese are conscious of the advantage of smaller families and are resorting to means for limiting their size, as may be seen by looking in at the windows of modern drug stores, where devices are openly displayed with that matter-of-factness about such things that is so natural to an Oriental and so shocking to the Occidental. Thus may be allayed one specter that has always been artificially blown up to frighten the West. This is that China would industrialize, breed up to its increase

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in wealth, and with sanitation and progress in medicine and prevention of disease—which also come automatically with mechanization—and prevention of famines and other natural disasters, would then multiply and overrun the earth. It will not. That is merely another of the many commonplaces springing from the little knowledge of the East that is as dangerous as any other kind of superficiality. The factors in industrialism which make for a larger population are counterbalanced by other factors making for reduction. If any hypothesis can be laid down now, it is that in the future there will be less disparity between food supply and population in China because the population will be relatively smaller. In so far as industrialization will yield the means of sustaining more people, it will not be necessary for the excess to overrun the earth.

Successful industrialization is only the skeleton, however. It is negative success. The strength of the West is in more than economic productivity. China's longevity, its capacity to survive and live in fullness while other nations have arisen, shone in their moment of glory and died, its grandeur and its contribution to what is lasting in the world—these have had nothing to do with its organization of production. China may become rich and efficient, and still not attain to full life as a nation. Breath must be blown into the bare bones of the anatomy of mechanization. But can it be, and what, and how? If not, then China becomes, not a nation but an agglomeration of individuals, better fed and better clothed and healthier than before, but without cohesion, without basis of mutual understanding, without spiritual source, without common

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cultural sustenance, without roots, without ties into unity. All the accumulation of the two thousand years that lie behind the Occidental peoples cannot be absorbed with learning to drive an automobile or guide a punch press.

To become American in efficiency, inventiveness and organizing genius is to have only the exterior of America and not to be American. It is to have all except what gives a people its mentality, its outlook, its address to life, its soul. All of that China is losing and must and will lose entirely, if it changes the externals of its life. So much is self-evident. The civilization which set the Chinese off from all other peoples cannot be carried over into a world of fast railways, aeroplanes, radio, daily papers and Fordized factories. The Chinese do not want to carry it over, even if they could: there are some who still naïvely believe that they can. But what shall replace it, if China is to survive as an entity and be something more than a despirited America? The commonest answer is that there must be a synthesis of what is best in the West with what was best in the old China. This, too, is naïve. One may breed animals for the good points in both and in time biology may be able to tell us how to breed human beings selectively, but cultures and societies cannot be bred that way and it is doubtful if they ever will be. Men do not consciously select the details of their environment to fit their institutions, their philosophy and their attitude to life. They unconsciously make those conform to their habits, which are fixed by their activities, which in turn are dictated by the social and economic environment. There will be no synthesis, with China taking just enough of

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science and scientific method to equip itself to compete with the modern world, while remaining Chinese in way of thought and spirit and manner of life.

China will no doubt remain Chinese, but not what the Chinese people have themselves considered to be Chinese in spirit and thought, not what a painter or poet at the court of the Mings considered Chinese—or what a scholar of the year 1800 considered Chinese, for that matter. There is too sharply defined a race personality, too tough a race individuality, for the Chinese to cease to be differentiated from all others, to be merely imitative and repetitive of a pattern imported from without. They may drop off into oblivion entirely, because they are spent and their day is done. But if they do not, they will remain a race apart, with a distinctive identity. Only, it will be a different identity from that which has signified China for nearly three thousand years.

What will it be? There is no answer. A clew may be given by the simile of the Chicago monkey-wrench. As a Chinese workman takes a monkey-wrench and makes of it something subtly different from what it would have been in a Chicago machine-shop, so China may take the externals of modernization and the West and, straining them through its own unique personality, infusing them with its own spirit, evolve a new society, a new civilization, a new culture and a new scheme of things, and a race regenerated, refreshed and started anew on a career as richly creative as history testifies it had once before.

These are the questions that China presents, questions involving more than China, certainly more than its civil

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wars, politics, problems of foreign affairs or chaos. What happens when two civilizations as widely separated in space and time and content as the Chinese and the Western meet, conflict and merge? Can a race as old as the Chinese violently swerve from a course deeply grooved in the passing of a hundred generations and launch itself on another without losing itself? Can a race, which has lived much and may be spent, have a regeneration? They are questions. The answers must be given by the event—in fifty years perhaps, more likely a hundred, and maybe two hundred. But by the answers, whenever given, the future of the whole world will be moulded.

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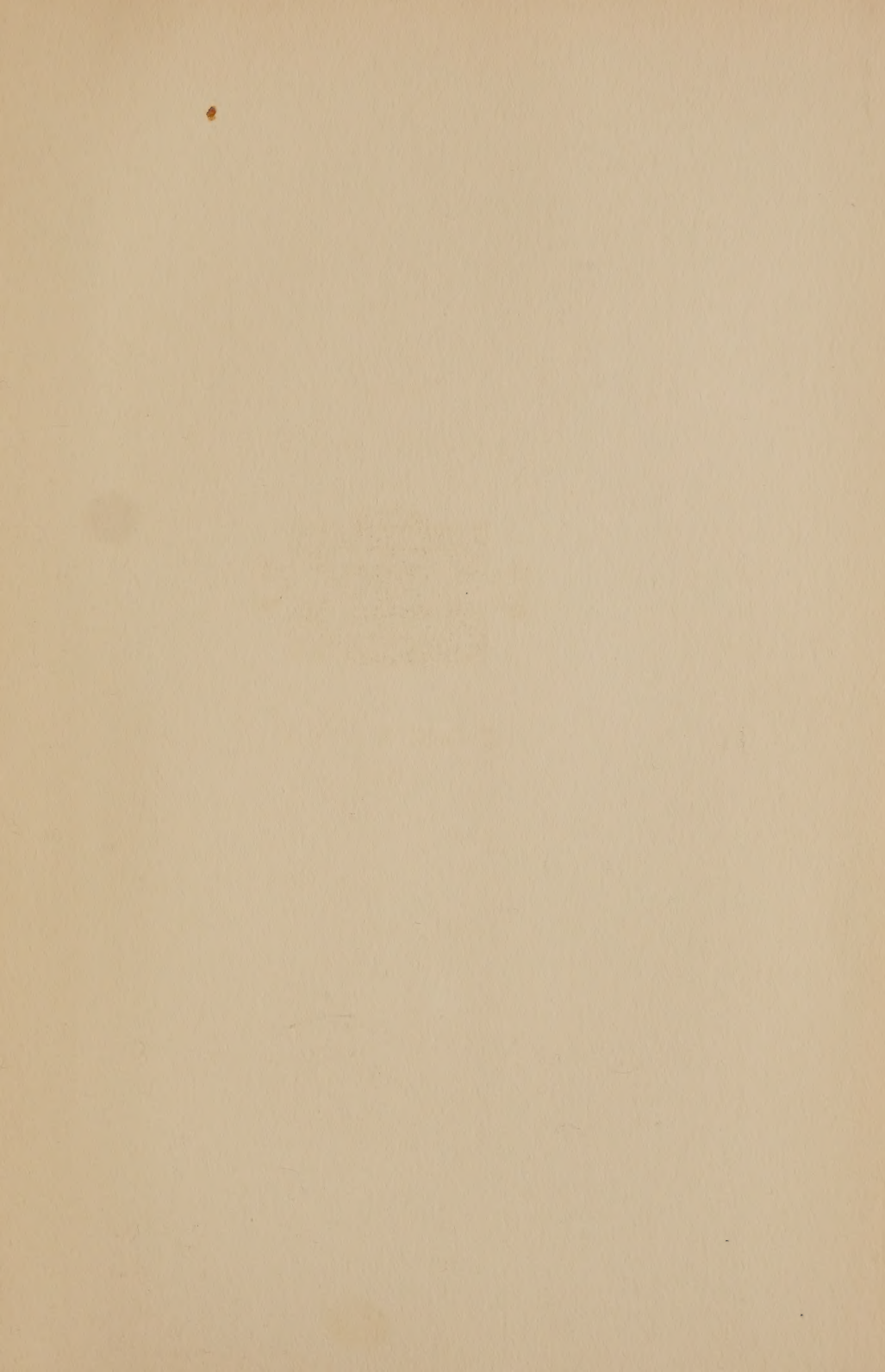
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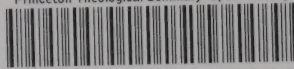
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